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Boys Will Be Boys

A COMEDY OF THE SOUL OF MAN
UNDER PROSPERITY

IN THREE ACTS

BY

CHARLES O'BRIEN KENNEDY

(Founded on Irvin S. Cobb's short story)

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IRVIN S. COBB

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The following is a copy of the playbill of the first performance of "Boys Will Be Boys" as produced at the Belmont Theatre, New York, October 13, 1919:

BOYS WILL BE BOYS

*A Comedy of the Soul of Man under Prosperity
In Three Acts*

By

CHARLES O'BRIEN KENNEDY

(Founded on Irvin S. Cobb's Story)

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Introducing our folks in the order of their first appearance

WILLIE BAGBY, *one of our boys*.....*Harold Bergh*

GEORGIE RUNYON, *another*.....*Nat Bulger*

PRESSLEY MERCER, *another*.....*Eddie Crane*

SERGT. JIMMY BAGBY, *our reconstructed rebel*—

George Park

JEFF POINDEXTER, *a colored boy*...*Frank I. Frayne*

DOCTOR WELLS, *our leading physician*—

Charles Reigel

NICK BELL, *our oldest citizen*.....*Claude Cooper*

BRECK QUARLES, *our deputy sheriff*.*Erville Alderson*

LUCY ALLEN, *our fairest daughter*—

Winifred Wellington

PEEP O'DAY *Harry Beresford*

TOM MINOR, *our promising son*..*Robert Armstrong*

MRS. LILY HUNTER, *a widow*—

Edna Archer Crawford

JUDGE PRIEST, *our honored Judge*..*W. H. St. James*


MR. SUBLETTE, *our leading attorney*—

Carl Anthony

MISS KATIE O'DAY, *from Cincinnati*—

Rose Mary King

Only one of the boys has an important speaking part. Any number of children can be used according to circumstances.



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NICK BELL, *our oldest citizen.*
BRECK QUARLES, *our deputy sheriff.*
LUCY ALLEN, *our fairest daughter.*
PEEP O'DAY.
TOM MINOR, *our promising son.*
MRS. LILY HUNTER, *a widow.*
JUDGE PRIEST, *our honored Judge.*
MR. SUBLETTE, *our leading attorney.*
MISS KATIE O'DAY, *from Cincinnati.*

Only one of the boys has an important speaking part. Any number of children can be used, according to circumstances.

TIME: ACT I. *May.*
ACTS II and III. *August.*
PLACE: *A small town in Kentucky.*

SCENES

ACT I. *Our favorite gathering place. Morning.*
ACT II. *Our old schoolhouse. Morning.*
ACT III. *Same place. Afternoon of same day.*

DESCRIPTIONS OF CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES

WILLIE BAGBY: *A bright, alert boy of thirteen, full of mischief. Old clothes in Act I and bare-footed. Dressed up in small town fashion with shoes and stockings, Acts II and III. (Same costuming applies to all the other children used.)*

SERGEANT BAGBY: *A short, dumpy man of sixty-five, full of energy, good nature, and fight. Act I wears typical clothes of a Southern livery stable keeper, with a Confederate Army cap. Act II Confederate grey uniform. Act III same as Act II, but in addition he carries his old army musket.*

JEFF POINDEXTER: *A colored boy aged sixteen. He is the Judge's general factotum. Very lazy, but full of animation when fun is going on. Same old clothes all through the play.*

DOCTOR WELLS: *An impressive-looking small town doctor, about fifty years old. Old-fashioned clothes throughout.*

NICK BELL: *A weazened old fellow of seventy, with a sharp sense of humor. Chews tobacco; carries a walking-stick; has a slight limp. Act I, any old clothes without a coat. Acts II and III, a full suit of very old-fashioned design.*

BRECK QUARLES: *A tall, angular sheriff, filled with self-importance; about forty-seven years old. Assumes much dignity when the Judge is not present. Act I, old clothes, slouch hat and deputy sheriff's badge. A full suit of better*

clothes in Acts II and III. Wears large belt, holster and revolver through the play.

LUCY ALLEN: *A sweet, charming little Southern girl. Age, eighteen or nineteen. Simple but stylish dress in Act I. Party dress for Acts II and III.*

TOM MINOR: *An energetic, good-looking young lawyer of twenty-two. A pretty good suit for Act I; his best suit for Acts II and III.*

MRS. LILY HUNTER: *A buxom widow of forty-five—hustling and energetic in movement and assertive in speech. Act I—plain housekeeping dress. Acts II and III, party dress with hat to match.*

JUDGE PRIEST: *A large, fat, kindly old man, aged sixty-two. Genial but shrewd; sympathetic without any emphasis on the fact. Wears old but clean Palm Beach suit throughout. Light slouch hat; cotton sunshade.*

KATIE O'DAY: *A manicure girl from Cincinnati, evidently dressed to impress the small-town natives. Aged twenty-five. Is breezy and flip-pant, but not ill-natured.*

PEEP O'DAY: *A quaint, timid, shuffling old fellow of sixty-three. In the first act he reminds one of a stray dog wandering about seeking some friendly hand to pat him. He must not be tearful nor self-pitying; just a lowly man trying to make the best of his lot in life and anxious to please everybody. Acts II and III he must be like an exhilarated boy, taking a keen delight in the blessings his money has brought him until the seriousness of his offense dawns on him. In Act I he is very miserably dressed and in his shirt-sleeves. Acts II and III he wears a cut-away coat, and a not too loud fancy vest. High boots with red tops and copper toes.*

MR. SUBLETTE, *a lawyer of about forty-five. Well-dressed in comparison with the other characters. He is energetic and direct and is the driving force in the serious scenes; particularly in the last act. One suit throughout.*

(These descriptions are not arbitrary, but may serve as an outline in casting. The character of JUDGE PRIEST is so well-known to Mr. Cobb's readers that a man answering JUDGE PRIEST's description is highly desirable.)

Boys Will Be Boys

SCENE: *The front of JIMMY BAGBY's livery stable. It is a warm day in May. Water-tap with tub just left of carriage door. Under tree right is a circular bench; also a large, comfortably cushioned office chair, and an old soap box. There are a couple of old boxes upstage against stable wall. Rest of scene as per diagram. (See Notes on Production in back of book.)*

As the curtain slowly rises JIMMY BAGBY is discovered standing at the carriage door—he is dressed for work about the stable. Some small boys are discovered playing stick-knife under the tree R.)

JEFF POINDEXTER. *(Enters from L. lazily. He carries a bag of grain over his shoulder which he drops on bulkhead saying)* Judge Priest sent me with them two bags of feed he borried from yer, Sergeant—one more comin'. *(Without waiting for BAGBY to reply he joins the boys at their game.)*

BAGBY. *(As he disappears into stable)* Peep—put down that saddle and git at them wagons.

DR. WELLS. *(Enters briskly L., bag in hand—sees boys)* Well—well—what's this? Playing jack-knife in the street. *(Crosses in front of them.)*

WILLIE. Yes, Doctor Wells.

WELLS. *(Emitting his final growl)* Here you, Jeff Poindexter—you better get back to your work. Judge Priest'll be wantin' you. *(Exits R.I.)*

WILLIE. The Doctor looks kinder mad.

BOYS WILL BE BOYS

JEFF. Yeh. The Doctor ain't happy 'less he's mad.

(NICK BELL *enters right upper—stops and watches boys a second.*)

NICK BELL. You boys better watch out the sheriff don't git yer.

JEFF. Ain't no sheriff goin' ter git me if I git one foot start of him.

BELL. Look hyah you—Willie—Bagby——

WILLIE. (*Coming to him*) Yes, sir?

BELL. Go git yer grandaddy's handsaw and take it over ter Mrs. Bell—right quick—d'ye hear?

WILLIE. Yes, Mr. Bell. I'll fetch it directly.

BELL. Be sure that "directly" means "right away," now. (*Exits into office. Boys resume play and are laughing merrily.*)

(BRECK QUARLES, *after a pause, enters stealthily L.I —sees boys and steals close to them.*)

WILLIE. (*Seeing BRECK*) Cheese it—the Sheriff! (*He and other boys run off. One crawls between the Sheriff's legs. JEFF is unable to recover his balance in time to get away.*)

BRECK. Jeff Poindexter—what yer tryin' ter do? Elude the sheriff?

JEFF. Good Lawd, no, Mr. Quarles. I wouldn't try ter do nothin' like that ter you.

BRECK. Have you seen Peep O'Day this mornin'?

JEFF. No, suh.

BRECK. Stop yer lyin'. Did yer see Peep O'Day this mornin'?

JEFF. Yes, suh.

BRECK. When and where?

JEFF. Right hyah, suh.

BRECK. What was he doin'?

JEFF. Nothin'. Jest lazyin' round.

BRECK. Was yer talkin' ter him?

JEFF. Jedge Priest don't allow me ter talk ter no white trash.

BRECK. (*After pause*) You go on 'bout yer business. The Jedge may be wantin' you down at the cotehouse.

JEFF. Yes, suh—Mr. Quarles. I was flyin' down there when you cum. (*Exits L.I slowly.*)

(BRECK hears whistling in office and pricks up his ears. SERGEANT BAGBY enters from office door.)

BRECK. Hello, Sergeant.

BAGBY. Howdye, Sheriff. Great days fer fishin', ain't they?

BRECK. Been takin' advantage of that fact recently?

BAGBY. Went yestiddy.

BRECK. Git much?

BAGBY. I tuk a nap on the bank fer about an hour, so Peep O'Day got more than I did.

BRECK. (*Wisely*) Oh! So Peep O'Day went with yer? Hum!

BAGBY. Yep. Want some?

BRECK. Yer mean the fish that Peep ketched? My official position won't permit me ter receive presents of fish from a questionable source.

BAGBY. Gawd. Yer talk like old Jedge Priest. What's on yer mind?

BRECK. Well, without it being obligatory on your part ter reply—jest how long have yer knowed Peep O'Day?

BAGBY. I recall my daddy takin' him outer the porehouse fer choreboy.

BRECK. Yer daddy ever say anything 'bout him special?

BAGBY. Nope.

BRECK. Hum! 'Tain't accordin' ter science fer fellers ter be alone all the time.

BAGBY. But pore white trash like Peep——

BRECK. Pore white trash ain't exempt frum my jurisdiction. (*Thinks a minute.*) What's he do *nights*?

BAGBY. Well, sometimes I hear him movin' about the barn when it's late—talkin' to the hosses.

(*BELL appears at office door, listening.*)

BRECK. Ever keep any record of the conversation?

BAGBY. Nope. Then ag'in I've heard him out in the back yard at night.

BRECK. Alone? (*BAGBY nods.*) What time of night?

BAGBY. Generally ten or eleven.

BRECK. Jest what was he a-doin'?

BAGBY. Nothin'. Jest leanin' ag'in' the fence a-lookin' at the sky. Seems like he'd stay there fer hours.

BRECK. (*Looking at sky*) Reckin I kin see all that's in the sky in five minutes.

BAGBY. Mebbe the old feller was jest thinkin'.

BRECK. A most important observation.

BAGBY. Ain't nothin' ag'in' thinkin', is they?

BRECK. Not if it don't conflict with the safety of the community. Eleven o'clock is a pretty late hour ter be lookin' at the sky—thinkin'. (*Judicially*) Man over sixty—talks to hosses at night—then gazes at the sky, thinkin'—must be a reason.

BAGBY. What kind of a reason?

BRECK. Folks must have a natural instinct ter leave that man alone. Now what do *you* deduct from this here corollary?

BAGBY. (*Moving off*) Reckin I'll let you figger that out fer yerself.

BRECK. (*With authority*) Mister Bagby, where is Peep O'Day?

BAGBY. What's the "mister" business fer?

BRECK. (*Profoundly mysterious*) Jedge Priest wants ter see *him*.

BAGBY. (*Defensively*) We didn't fish off nobody's property.

BRECK. Didn't say *you* did.

BAGBY. Neither did Peep.

BRECK. Yer jest said yer was asleep fer an hour.

BAGBY. Oh! Now I've got a lot er work fer Peep ter do and——

BRECK. (*Musingly*) Jedge Priest won't be found wantin' when it cums ter weighin' the evidence I accumulate.

BELL. Breck Quarles—Peep O'Day ain't never done nothin' useful or bad.

BRECK. It's a pretty sound theory in law that doin' nothing is next ter doin' harm.

BELL. Yer allus smotherin' what yer have ter say under a lot 'er big words.

BRECK. In some communities education ain't no crime.

BAGBY. What do yer want Peep fer?

BRECK. Hush. They's three ways of private business gittin' out: Telephone, telegraph, or tell anybody. (*Laughs at his own joke. BELL also laughs loudly. BRECK crosses to R.I and stops suddenly. Then to others*) Hush! I reckon an important development in the case is about ter begin. (*Motions the two men off and they go into the office and listen curiously at window. LUCY ALLEN comes on hurriedly—not seeing the others. She goes to carriage door and gives a peculiar call. No answer. She comes to bench R. and sits expectantly. BRECK steals around tree to her L., raises hat and speaks deferentially*) Good mornin', Miss Lucy.

LUCY. (*Comes to him with extended hand*) Oh! How do you do, Mr. Quarles?

BRECK. (*Shaking her hand*) Fust time I seed yer since yer cum home on vacation.

LUCY. But you'll see me often now. I've graduated, you know.

BRECK. So yer daddy tells me. (*Pause—then with assumed nonchalance*) Seen much of yer old friend, Peep O'Day, since yer been back? (*She gives a little start. He continues shrewdly*) I see yer have. (*Slowly*) Didn't chance ter see him yestiddy, did yer?

BAGBY. (*At window*) How c'u'd she when he was fishin'?

BRECK. Hush. Mr. Bagby, I warn yer, friendship has ceased ter exist fer the minute.

BELL. So has brains.

BRECK. (*Disregarding him—to LUCY, who has started away*) Miss Allen—it's only fair ter warn yer afore yer say or do anything—but Jedge Priest has sent me fer Peep O'Day's body.

LUCY. (*Startled*) Good Heavens, he's not——

BRECK. Nope! The law ain't interested in 'em after they're dead.

LUCY. But what does the Judge want *him* for?

BRECK. (*Crossing to L.*) Crime is sorter psychological.

BELL. Bet he can't spell that.

BRECK. Hush! With some men crime jest breaks out in spots. With others it breaks out all over 'em at oncet. (*With a look at BAGBY and BELL.*) Reckin it'll be best fer Peep O'Day if his friends advise him ter cum ter me and surrender. It'll save a lot ov unnecessary force. Frum a humanitarian standpoint, I never care to employ the harsher expedients unless I'm druv to it. (*Exits L. I with great dignity.*)

BELL. (*After a pause*) What'd he say?

BAGBY. Damifino.

LUCY. (*Anxiously*) What is it all about?

(BELL *disappears from window.*)

BAGBY. Lord bless yer, honey, don't mind that old fool. (*Comes to her, with a quiet smile, trying to ease her mind.*) Seen Tom Minor today, Miss Lucy?

LUCY. (*Suddenly*) I wonder if that's it?

BAGBY. What, honey?

LUCY. Tom sent me a note last night. Peep brought it and daddy got hold of it.

BAGBY. Good Lord! And yer paw bein' so bitter ag'in' Tom. Mebbe that's what they call a conspiracy. Wait here. I'll find Peep. (*Exits into office, calling, "Peep! Peep!"*) LUCY *sits under tree expectantly. After a pause* PEEP *enters from carriage door with water-bucket—he is singing "London Bridge" in a low voice.*)

LUCY. Peep!

PEEP. Miss Lucy!

LUCY. Did anyone see Tom Minor give you that note last night?

PEEP. Nope. I hid it in the mess of fish I brung yer. Told the cook it was special fer you.

LUCY. (*Puzzled*) Then I wonder——

PEEP. (*After a pause*) If Mr. Tom is comin'—(*Starts to go.*)

LUCY. Don't go—— (*He chuckles mysteriously.*) Peep, what have you been doing?

PEEP. (*Evasively, as if enjoying a secret*) Nothin', mostly.

LUCY. You went fishing yesterday.

PEEP. (*Brightly*) Yep, with Sergeant Bagby. Makes it like a holiday when yer have a feller with yer. I ain't had one since I don't know when.

LUCY. But what happened? (PEEP chuckles.) Peep, I asked you a question.

PEEP. (*Looks about cautiously*) Yer won't tell—honest? (*She shakes her head.*) Well, Sergeant fell asleep fer a spell—and I seen a little chipmunk in Mr. Righton's back yard, so I ups and climbs the fence. The little feller sat there makin' faces and I kinder coaxed him over ter me.

LUCY. And you?

PEEP. Yer know Mrs. Hunter?

LUCY. Mr. Righton's housekeeper?

PEEP. Well, she hollered at me—but jest the same I grabbed the chipmunk and toted him home with me.

LUCY. Oh! What did you do that for?

PEEP. I thought mebbe the little feller 'u'd get ter like me and I'd have him fer stiddy company.

LUCY. You are sure Mrs. Hunter saw you?

PEEP. She muster, cause she hollered, "Git outer there, white trash!" and when folks say that I know they're talkin' ter me.

LUCY. But there are signs all over Mr. Righton's place reading "No Trespassing."

PEEP. Allus was glad I can't read. Don't know half the things I can't do. (*Chuckles and looks about—pulls open vest and chipmunk's head is seen above the top of his pocket inside vest.*) Wanter see him, Miss Lucy? Look at him. Face like a monkey in a pictur' book.

LUCY. But this is serious. Judge Priest has sent Sheriff Quarles looking for you.

PEEP. (*Happily*) Ooo—mebbe he'll arrest me.

LUCY. Oh! Peep, hide it. What if you are arrested?

PEEP. Ain't I selfish? And Sergeant havin' all them wagons ter wash. And I wouldn't have no more fun totin' notes fer you and Mr. Tom.

LUCY. Well, we must find Tom right away and he can tell you what to do.

PEEP. (*Whimsically*) Wish I had a lot of money to give yer so's you and Mr. Tom c'u'd git married. (*She smiles.*) I'd throw it in yer winder when yer was asleep. I have a purpose about you, honey.

LUCY. Why, Peep, I never knew you had a purpose.

PEEP. Every feller has a purpose. I went without one fer a long time—never had no friends no more'n a yeller dog. Till one day yer maw wheeled you in here in yer baby carriage and while she was a-talkin' ter Mrs. Bagby, I snuk over and made funny faces at yer, and yer laughed and tuk hold of my hand—them two fingers—— (*Indicates last two fingers on right hand.*) Yer little paw jest hung on like a vise—and all of a sudden somethin' jest sorter jumped up inside er me and frum that minute on I had a puppose.

LUCY. And you never told me all these years. (*Takes hold of his two fingers.*)

PEEP. (*Bashfully*) Well, I didn't wanter share it with nobody. But things sorter seem ter be in the air today, somehow.

LUCY. But you haven't told me about your puppose.

PEEP. It's you and Mister Tom—— (*Pauses and chuckles.*) I know a lotter ways ter make kid-dies laugh, only folks won't give me no chancet. But they've got ter mighty quick, because pretty soon there won't be no more old Peep.

LUCY. Peep—what a romancer you are.

PEEP. Miss Lucy, they ain't nothin' I wouldn't do ter make you happy—— (*Afterthought*) —and Mr. Tom.

LUCY. (*Half sadly*) Oh, Peep, if it only could come true.

PEEP. (*With a flash of seriousness*) It's got ter

cum true. Every night I ask Him, and I know He hears me, cause I wait till the other folks is through talking ter Him.

LUCY. Dear old Peep. That's why I wanted to see you. You must not bring me any more notes from Tom.

PEEP. You and Mr. Tom ain't had no fuss?

LUCY. No; but I can't see him any more.

PEEP. What's the matter, honey? It was lots er fun totin' notes fer yer. You and Mr. Tom is my puppose.

LUCY. My father has turned against Tom, so I have to choose between the two—and daddy is so sick—and I can't fight him now. (*Starts toward L. TOM enters R.U. PEEP motions TOM to go after her.*)

TOM. Wait a minute, Lucy. What's your hurry?

LUCY. My father——

TOM. Wait. I have news for you. (*She turns.*) I made my first speech in court today.

PEEP. What did yer say?

TOM. I said it was time that justice was done to old Mrs. Glaser and that I was there to see that it was done.

PEEP. Wisht I'd a-heard yer—I'd been so excited.

TOM. *You* might have, Peep. All the rest laughed. But Judge Priest said I was a valuable addition to the local bar. I reckon he was kidding me, at that.

BAGBY. (*Appears at office door*) Peep—them wagons got ter be washed. What yer doin', standin' round? Howdy, Tom. (*Goes back into office.*)

PEEP. Mr. Tom, I reckon I'll soon be needin' a good lawyer.

TOM. Meaning me? (*PEEP nods.*) You're on.

(To LUCY) I've got a case. What have you been doing? I hear the sheriff is looking for you.

PEEP. I've been kidnappin', I reckon.

LUCY. It isn't anything. Peep took a foolish little squirrel from Mr. Righton's yard.

TOM. From the way the sheriff talks it might be a Supreme Court case.

PEEP. What cote is that?

TOM. Biggest in the land.

PEEP. Bigger'n Judge Priest?

TOM. Lord, yes.

PEEP. Ain't no sich place. Reckin I better see the Judge right away. (*Exits into stable.*)

BAGBY. (*Off stage*) Peep—ain't yer got ter work yit?

TOM. (*After a pause*) What's your father got against me?

LUCY. I don't know. Ever since Mr. Sublette talked to him he's been opposed to you.

TOM. That's it. Mr. Sublette. I thought so. It's the Glaser case. Sublette is at the bottom of the whole conspiracy to rob Mrs. Glaser of her rights. Every lawyer in this town has been forced to give her case up. But here's *one* that won't give it up. I'm going to win it for her.

LUCY. If she wins, my father loses.

TOM. No, he won't, dear. He will only be the surer of his title. Can't you see, the property really belongs to Mrs. Glaser and Sublette is trying to do her out of it? If I establish her rights, the only difference it will make to your father is that he will have to buy it from Mrs. Glaser and not from Sublette.

LUCY. I'm sorry for Mrs. Glaser—but my father says she has no claim.

TOM. Why? Because Sublette has robbed her. Because he has either hidden or destroyed her deeds

and made her title defective. His own claim is based on a document I know to be forged.

LUCY. All I know is that my father is ill. This trouble has made him sick. (*Crosses to R.*)

TOM. Sick with shame, I reckon.

LUCY. Tom Minor! (*Turns on TOM.*)

TOM. Please forgive me. But it's the truth, Lucy. Can't you see, I've got to fight to save your father, too? Can't you trust me?

LUCY. Oh! Please. Why do you make it so hard for me? I must choose between you and Daddy. (*With sudden appeal*) Tom, you could help us all if—if——

(PEEP enters stealthily and pretends to get water from tap at side of stable. Listens.)

TOM. Don't ask me to quit, Lucy. I can't do that.

LUCY. Then you force me to choose my father.

TOM. That's only natural, honey—love and loyalty to your father. I love you. I'd do anything in the world for you except sacrifice my self-respect. If I did that, you'd hate me. I'm going to win that case. I believe the missing deeds are in Sublette's safe right now.

LUCY. But you don't *know* that.

TOM. The last time Mrs. Glaser saw them they were in Sublette's hands in a big blue envelope tied with red ribbon. I'm going to get them if I have to rob Sublette's safe myself.

LUCY. No—no, Tom——

TOM. (*Sees PEEP*) Well, Peep, been arrested yet?

PEEP. Nope. Ain't you two made up yet?

LUCY. (*Embarrassed, starts for office and speaks as she exits*) I'll call up Mr. Righton and tell him Peep will bring back the chipmunk.

PEEP. (*After she is off*) Mr. Tom, I got a stiddy job now.

TOM. Yes?

LUCY. (*Heard inside office—not visible*) Give me forty-eight, please, party J.

PEEP. Yep. I clean out Mr. Sublette's office oncet a week.

TOM. (*Smiles*) That ought to help.

PEEP. I dust off the books and the *big safe* and things——

LUCY. (*Off*) Is Mr. Righton home?

TOM. Well?

PEEP. (*Insinuating*) Ain't they somethin' ye'd like fer me ter do? Somethin' yer want me ter git—outer Mr. Sublette's office? I knows a blue envelope when I sees one.

TOM. (*Comprehending—rises*) No, Peep. Not you—not you.

BAGBY. (*Heard off*) Peep—them wagons has got ter be washed terday. Cum on, man.

PEEP. Reckin I better git my work done afore I gits arrested. (*Exits in carriage door.*)

LUCY. (*Enters from office*) Mr. Righton isn't at home. (*Starts to go L.*)

TOM. Don't go, Lucy. Won't you stay and talk to a fellow?

LUCY. (*Half hesitatingly*) I'm afraid I can't, Tom. I'm sorry. (*Goes to L.I., looks down street—stops—and goes to TOM, saying apprehensively*) The sheriff is coming back.

(BRECK enters L.I with MRS. HUNTER, chatting.
Sees TOM.)

BRECK. Howdye, Mr. Minor.

TOM. Hello, Breck. How do you do, Mrs. Hunter?

MRS. HUNTER. How do you do, Mr. Minor—Miss Lucy.

BRECK. (*To TOM insinuatingly*) You and Miss Lucy seem kinder partial to this here particular livery stable.

TOM. It's the only first-class stable in town.

BRECK. That also seems ter be the opinion held by one Peep O'Day. Have yer seen the said party?

TOM. You must be slowing up, Breck, when you ask for assistance.

BRECK. I don't think it becomin' of you, Mr. Minor, ter criticize folks of larger and possibly more successful law experience than yer own.

TOM. Well, Mr. Rising Young Sheriff, I have seen said party.

BRECK. Then perhaps yer will be good enough ter tell me the whereabouts of the culprit.

TOM. Culprit?

BRECK. Well, ter be more exact—dog poisoner.

LUCY. (*Quickly*) He didn't. It was about a squirrel.

BRECK. (*Sharply*) A squirrel? Things seem ter be accumulatin'. What about a squirrel?

TOM. (*As she is about to reply*) One moment, Lucy. Who says Peep poisoned a dog?

BRECK. That will develop in cote proceedin's. Mr. Righton's dog was found dead in his barn this mornin'. All life has passed from the body of said animal and it was pronounced poisoned. Mrs. Hunter here——

MRS. HUNTER. (*Assertively*) I seen Peep O'Day climb over our fence yestiddy and I yelled at him and he run.

LUCY. I know all about that. Peep just——

BRECK. Hush. I'll examine your testimony at length later on. (*To TOM*) It's a theory of mine that the poisoner of the dog allus goes home and



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hides hisself, so I guess we'll jest naturally find the suspect in this hyah stable.

TOM. Where's your warrant?

BRECK. (*Stops*) Humph! Reckin my inferential evidence will lead me to his hidin' place. (*Starts to enter stable.*)

TOM. Not without a warrant. I know a little law myself.

BRECK. Jest about enough ter know which is the jedge and which is the prisoner. I want this man on suspicion.

MRS. HUNTER. I seen him——

TOM. (*Breaking in*) You saw a man climbing your fence. How did you know it was Peep?

MRS. HUNTER. Lawdy—everybody knows Peep—the ornierest white trash in this town.

TOM. *Mr. O'Day is my client.*

BRECK. So—he's already engaged counsel. Accumulative evidence affirmin' the presupposition of guilt.

TOM. (*Suddenly to BRECK*) What were you doing at Mr. Righton's this morning when you should have been looking for Peep?

MRS. HUNTER. (*Beaming coyly*) Ain't no law ag'in' Mr. Quarles comin' ter see me if he wants ter.

BRECK. 'Tain't fair ter drag my private life inter politics.

LUCY. (*Looking down the street*) Oh! Here's Judge Priest now. We'll see what he has to say about it.

(JUDGE PRIEST *enters leisurely, followed by JEFF, who runs around back to tree R. and arranges armchair for JUDGE. He puts the JUDGE's green bag and cotton umbrella on ground near chair.*)

JUDGE PRIEST. Howdye, folks. (*Bows to ladies*)

Mrs. Hunter—Miss Lucy. (*There is a pause and then all the others start talking to the JUDGE at once.*) Just a minute—just a minute. I'd much rather ye all talk slow and separate.

JEFF. It's all ready fer yer ter set in, yer honor.

JUDGE. (*Crosses R.—sits in chair*) Thank yer, Jefferson. You bring all that feed back ter Sergeant Bagby?

JEFF. Mostly, suh! I was busy helping the sheriff look fer Peep O'Day.

JUDGE. You go and bring that feed back, yer lazy—— (*JEFF runs off around back and exits L. JUDGE laughs and settles back in chair.*) Now, then——

BRECK. Jedge, Peep O'Day——

TOM. I represent the defendant, Your Honor.

JUDGE. Good. You are an attorney whose eloquence is well worth listenin' to. (*TOM smiles.*) I only hope you are as successful in persuadin' other folks in other kinds of courtin' cases. (*Smiles at LUCY.*)

BRECK. Jedge, Mr. Minor knows where Peep O'Day is hidin' and he won't tell.

JUDGE. Mr. Minor, I call on you to assist Mr. Quarles in bringin' said individual into our presence.

LUCY. But Judge—please—— (*Puts hand on his shoulder.*)

JUDGE. Miss Lucy, the Judge must be detached and isolated from all outside influences—— (*Gently removes her hands.*)

BRECK. Guess the Jedge knows a little law, too.

JUDGE. Thank yer fer the compliment, Breckenridge—— (*Pause.*) Mr. Minor, your duty is before yer.

TOM. (*After a pause*) Lucy, I've got to do it. (*Dashes into stable, followed by BRECK.*)

JUDGE. (*To MRS. HUNTER*) Mebbe you better

follow them, Mrs. Hunter. (MRS. HUNTER *runs after BRECK and TOM, calling, "Breckenridge."* JUDGE *leans back and laughs.*) Lordy, Lordy—how them widder wimmen protect their future prospects.

LUCY. (Suddenly) What does my father want you to do with Peep? (She is impetuous and anxious during this scene, while the JUDGE is genial and deliberate.)

JUDGE. What's my wantin' Peep ter do with yer father?

LUCY. Well—well—you know Daddy is opposed to Tom and me—

JUDGE. How long has he opposed yer, honey, and what fer?

LUCY. Ever since Tom took up Mrs. Glaser's case.

JUDGE. (Shrewdly) Hum!

LUCY. Is that right? Put yourself in Tom's place.

JUDGE. Good Lord, honey—my figger precludes me.

LUCY. Well, last night Peep brought some fish to our house and put Tom's note inside one of the fish.

JUDGE. The clever old scoundrel.

LUCY. Daddy saw the note. But Peep isn't to blame for that, is he?

JUDGE. He is a conspirator of the deepest dye. A love note inside a fish! (Rocks with laughter.) There—there, honey. Yer father ain't said nothin' ter me. As for Peep—the message wasn't carried by him; it was carried by the fish, and I can't arrest the fish.

BAGBY. (Strides out of the stable angrily) Jedge Priest!

JUDGE. Sergeant?

BAGBY. Do you know what Breck Quarles is sayin'—him and Lily Hunter? (JUDGE looks at him.)

She is so crazy ter marry Breck, she swears to anything he says.

JUDGE. Well, after they're married she'll do the sayin' and he'll do the swearin'. (*During the rest of the scene LUCY and BAGBY are excited, while the JUDGE is quietly amused.*)

BAGBY. They are sayin' as how Peep poisoned Mr. Righton's dog.

JUDGE. Mighty serious charge.

LUCY. (*Vehemently to JUDGE*) But he didn't—he didn't—and you know he didn't.

JUDGE. Miss Lucy, I beg of you not to intimidate me.

LUCY. We're only trying to convince you.

JUDGE. You have succeeded. Old Peep wouldn't hurt no dog that was wuss off than himself.

LUCY. You knew this and wouldn't tell me?

JUDGE. Didn't know you were so interested in the dog.

BAGBY. We wasn't! We was only interested in Peep.

LUCY. (*After slight pause—suddenly*) What has he done?

JUDGE. Miss Lucy, the only way ter get secrets out of a lawyer is ter marry one.

BAGBY. But, Yer Honor, don't keep us on the griddle. What *do* yer want him for?

JUDGE. Pardon my seemin' abruptness, but that is a matter strictly of Mr. O'Day's private business.

BAGBY. Peep O'Day ain't never had no business—public nor private. (*Crosses to steps of house L.I.*)

(*Voices of BRECK, TOM, MRS. HUNTER heard in stable calling on PEEP to stop. He rushes on from carriage door.*)

PEEP. I surrender, Jedge—I surrender.

JUDGE. Good Lord! (*LUCY puts protecting arm over PEEP's shoulder.*)

BRECK. (*Dashes on, followed by TOM and MRS. HUNTER*) I got him, Jedge! Trailed him from the loft to the cellar. (*Is about to grab PEEP by L. shoulder. MRS. HUNTER L. of BRECK.*)

JUDGE. That'll do, Breckenridge. Reckin your sleuthin' process is perfect.

LUCY. (*Quickly*) Judge, I heard him say he wanted to give himself up to you personally.

TOM. (*Briskly*) I represent the defendant, Your Honor.

BRECK. Hope he'll have better luck than Mrs. Glaser's goin' ter have.

JUDGE. (*With reproving glance at BRECK—speaks quietly*) Well, for the present, Mr. Minor, the cote elects to have a private session with the defendant.

TOM. Just as you say, Your Honor. (*LUCY runs to JUDGE and kisses him.*)

JUDGE. Here—here! Stop tryin' ter bribe the cote. (*TOM and LUCY go up stage. To BRECK*) Sheriff—thank yer fer wishin' ter protect my life ag'in' possible attack—(*Indicating PEEP, who is standing dejectedly*)—but yer official and friendly presence ain't necessary.

BRECK. As you say, Judge. (*Comes to JUDGE and says in low voice*) Ask him what he's been doin' out nights lookin' at the sky. (*To MRS. HUNTER*). Coming my way, Lily?

BAGBY. Course she is. Ain't her job like yours—man-huntin'?

MRS. HUNTER. I never notice no sich kinder talk, Jimmy Bagby. (*They exit R.U.*)

BAGBY. (*Calling after them as they exit*) Jim Hunter asked a dozen women ter marry him long afore he ever thought of you!

JUDGE. (*To JIMMY*) Jimmy, it ain't necessary ter detain you, seein' as how you have yer work to do.

BAGBY. (*As he exits*) Just as you say, Billy, but

I don't take no back talk from no second choices.
(*Exits L. into house.*)

(*BELL is listening at office window. The JUDGE catches him. BELL laughs and disappears.*)

TOM. I represent the defendant, Your Honor.
(*With LUCY comes down R. of tree.*)

JUDGE. Well! I thought you had gone! Clear out of here. You are obstructin' the machinery of justice. (TOM and LUCY exit R. I slowly. PEEP slowly realizes he is alone with the JUDGE and the seriousness of the occasion begins to dawn on him. The old helpless, longing look returns to his face.) Sit down, Peep. (PEEP looks around—sees box up c.—sits.) No—here—— (PEEP brings down box and sits c.) Tell me—what have you been doin' fer a livin' all these years?

PEEP. (*Timidly*) Well, suh, I help mostly round the stable hyah. I sleep in the little room behind the feed bins and the Sergeant gives me vittles. Sometimes I git an odd job outside splittin' wood or cuttin' weeds and sich as that.

JUDGE. Interestin' frum the standpoint of variety, but not much money in it?

PEEP. Folks is more prone to give me old clothes instead. I don't live fancy—but then, I don't starve; and that's more'n some gits.

JUDGE. But yer business ain't sufferin' from over-capitalization. Now tell me, what's the most money you ever had?

PEEP. I remember oncet havin' seventy-five cents, but that was an extry good week.

JUDGE. What do you do when you're out nights lookin' at the sky?

PEEP. Dunno—mebbe countin' the stars. I see more and more every time I look. I see Miss Lucy

and Mr. Tom—and they're gettin' closer and closer—an', oh Jedge—

JUDGE. I see. Have you always been known as Peep O'Day?

PEEP. Yep. Folks started out callin' me Little Peep; when I growed up I was plain Peep; and now it's Old Peep. But my name is jest as you say, Jedge—Peep O'Day—I reckon.

JUDGE. What was your mother's and father's name?

PEEP. My paw and maw up and died afore I kin remember much; but I heard the folks in the porehouse speak of Phil and Kate as bein' the ones ter blame.

JUDGE. Philip and Katherine O'Day. Reckon the difference in names is just one of social familiarity. Everything is straight so far. Now, I want yer—

PEEP. Oh! Don't, suh. Yer see, Jedge, I ain't got no one ter speak a good word fer me, exceptin' Miss Lucy might.

JUDGE. I have reason to know she will speak several good words fer yer, Mr. O'Day.

PEEP. Reckin I muster done somethin' awful ter have yer call my name that away, Jedge.

JUDGE. My language is simply cote formula. Now I want yer ter go back to the past and see what yer kin bring out of it.

PEEP. I reckon they ain't nothin' in my past wuth bringin' out, suh. I jest sorter lived—that's all.

JUDGE. Hum! Now think hard and see if you kin remember anything about yer father's brother, Daniel O'Day.

PEEP. They told me in the porehouse oncet they writ ter some kin of mine in a place called Cincinnati askin' 'em ter cum and git me. But they writ back as how they didn't want me.

JUDGE. Kin in Cincinnati. Hum! Well, anyway, this Uncle Daniel of yours lived in a little town

in Ireland called Kilmare. (*Very deliberately takes box beside him and stands it on end before him to serve as desk. Takes papers from green bag and puts them on top of box.*)

PEEP. (*Who is watching with bewildered look, says in frightened voice*) Judge—don't go no further. I'm guilty.

JUDGE. Huh?

PEEP. (*Rapidly*) I did take that chipmunk from Mr. Righton's place. I hid it in the crack-corn bin and was goin' ter take it back.

JUDGE. Good Lord, man!

PEEP. I couldn't help it. I jest wanted some-thin' that was *alive* fer company.

JUDGE. Good citizens should observe the restraints of society, Peep.

PEEP. I never thought I'd be tuk up by the biggest cote in America.

JUDGE. Peep—you're flattering me.

PEEP. The little feller crawled inter my pocket, Judge—and I tried—yer see, hosses is good company, but yer can't allus be close to 'em.

JUDGE. Lawd a mercy!

PEEP. Folks kin tell you I didn't wanter be tried by no cote but yours.

JUDGE. Well, Mr. O'Day, this cote is thoroughly appreciative of the honor yer have bestowed on it—but law is law and chipmunks is chipmunks. Guess I'll have ter fine yer about a dollar and a half.

PEEP. (*After a pause*) Don't tell Miss Lucy I've been sent up.

JUDGE. Peep, yer imagination is gallopin' off with yer. I ain't goin' ter send you up.

PEEP. You'll let me work it out? I'll clean yer office—wash yer winders——

(BAGBY and BELL appear at office window, listening.)

BRECK joins them, having presumably entered at rear of house.)

JUDGE. Sorry, but this cote operates on a cash basis. (*Looks at paper a moment.*) Now, then—Mr. Paul Felix O'Day. (PEEP is amazed and finally sinks slowly on box.) Reckin that is your name, all right.

PEEP. It useter be, Jedge. But I ain't heard it fer so long I cum mighty nigh fergettin' it.

JUDGE. Good. Now what you say if I was ter tell you that you was a rich man?

PEEP. Reckin, if it ain't disrespectful, I'd say you was a-lyin'.

JUDGE. (*Laughs*) It is my pleasant duty to inform you that at this moment you are the rightful owner of eight thousand pounds.

PEEP. Pounds of what, Jedge?

JUDGE. Pounds in money.

PEEP. (*After a bewildered pause*) Eight thousand pounds er money. It 'u'd take a powerful man ter lift that much, wouldn't it?

JUDGE. I mean pounds in English money. Near as I kin figgur out it cums in our money to somewhere between thirty-five and forty thousand dollars. Nearer forty. (BRECK, BELL and BAGBY, who have been listening at office window, disappear. Crash of falling chair is heard. JUDGE looks up and pauses and smiles.) And it's all yours, Peep. Every red cent of it.

PEEP. (*Still in daze*) Excuse me, suh. Not meanin' ter contradict, but there must be some mistake.

JUDGE. (*Shakes head*) Yer Uncle Daniel died without leavin' a will. Mebbe he never knew you were alive, even.

PEEP. (*Pause*) Too bad he didn't know about Miss Lucy.

JUDGE. (*Gazes at him kindly—sees BRECK, BELL and BAGBY, who have reappeared at window*) At any rate, Peep, the money jest naturally goes to you. You bein' the next of kin and heir-at-law.

PEEP. (*Recovering—speaks eagerly*) Hev ye got the money with ye, suh?

JUDGE. Not yet, Peep. It has to cross the ocean and there's some papers yer'll have ter sign yer name ter.

PEEP. I knowed there was a ketch in it, Jedge. I knowed it.

JUDGE. What do you mean, Peep?

PEEP. You know I don't know how ter write my name, let alone sign it.

JUDGE. That's all right, Peep. (*Glances slyly at window, where BRECK and others are listening with breathless interest.*) Let me see—— (*Calls as if through stable door*) Sergeant—Sergeant Bagby! (*All three disappear from window.*) Reckin as how the money worship of mankind will soon be manifest.

(BAGBY, BRECK and BELL enter from office, tingling with excitement.)

BRECK. You call us, Jedge?

JUDGE. Why, Breck! Didn't know you was round. Got any more evidence against Peep?

BRECK. (*Genially slapping PEEP on the back*) Aw—they ain't nothin' ag'in' Peep. Knowed it all the time. Duty, that's all.

JUDGE. But what are you so excited about?

BRECK. Nothin'. Nothin' at all. I've got some important business down street now. Excuse me, Jedge. So long, Peep! (*Exits L.I., falling over himself.*)

JUDGE. Sergeant, I want you to witness Mr. O'Day's mark on this document. (*Puts down paper.*)

Takes out fountain-pen, shakes it and hands it to PEEP, who looks at it curiously.) Jest make a criss-cross here. (*PEEP makes mark.*) Sergeant, you sign here. (*SERGEANT signs.*) Thank yer, Sergeant. That's all.

BAGBY. (*Dashes after BRECK, saying*) Peep—yer kin have the rest of the day off.

BELL. Where you going?

BAGBY. (*Off stage*) Ter git some axle grease.

BELL. Wait fer me. I'll help yer. (*Rushes off L. after BAGBY.*)

JUDGE. I'm glad of your good fortune, Peep, and I'm pleased ter be the humble instrument where the law and the Lord have decided ter work in hand for once. I congratulate you. (*Extends hands.*)

PEEP. (*JUDGE encourages him with a gaze—he shakes JUDGE's hand*) Wonder if it'll take long afore I git that money.

JUDGE. Makin' plans already?

PEEP. Reckin it wouldn't be no more than fair ter divide with you fer all your trouble on a hot day like this.

JUDGE. No, Peep—that wouldn't be proper.

PEEP. (*Perplexed*) What's the fust thing you think I oughter do?

JUDGE. Well, it's fittin' fer a man of your substance ter change yer way of livin'. You better go down to Mr. Felsberg's store and git a suit of clothes and shoes. Tell him I sent you. However, that's hardly necessary, as I reckon your fame is now spread through the community. (*Looks down street.*)

PEEP. Will folks talk about me?

JUDGE. Yep. Yer see, prosperity alters a man's life both outside and in, and what happens outside after a feller gits rich gives a pretty fair notion of what's allus been happenin' inside. (*Pause.*) I also

think you should git some decent lodgin' over in the hotel.

PEEP. (*Shakes head*) It might make folks think I was stuck up. I'd hate ter give up my room in the stable. Got it fixed up ter my own notion. Then ag'in, I don't know as any place would seem so much like home ter me. And hosses is allus sich good company.

JUDGE. (*Sympathetically—puts papers in bag*) I don't know but you've got the right notion after all.

PEEP. (*Uneasily*) Reckin it'll take a right smart while fer all that money ter cross the ocean.

JUDGE. (*Slyly*) Was yer figgurin' on investin' some right away?

PEEP. (*Like a boy trying to touch his father*) Well—I was thinkin' I c'u'd use as much as a silver dollar—seventy-five cents—fifty cents. But, of course, seein' it may be quite a spell afore the fust load of money gets in—if I'm wantin' too much—

JUDGE. A dollar sounds kinder moderate. Reckin that detail kin be arranged. (*Goes to PEEP—hands him silver dollar.*) Peep, you don't realize the thrill I git from bein' of assistance to a man of your standin'.

MRS. HUNTER. (*Rushes on from L.*) Oh, Judge! I jest wanter tell yer, Mr. Righton's dog wasn't poisoned, after all.

JUDGE. Indeed?

MRS. HUNTER. The idea of folks tryin' ter make me think it was Mr. O'Day. Jest told Breck Quarles he oughter be ashamed of hisself. (*Coquetishly to PEEP*) But you was climbin' over our fence. You funny man, I seen yer. Next time you come in by that gate and stop and chat with a body. (*Exits into office.*)

PEEP. Mighty glad she don't know I stole that chipmunk. (*Goes toward office.*)

SUBLETTE. (*Enters L.I*) Howdye, Jedge. Seen Sergeant Bagby? (*Pretends not to notice PEEP.*)

JUDGE. He's gone down the street, Mr. Sublette.

SUBLETTE. (*As if seeing PEEP for the first time*) Well, well, Peep! What's this I hear? Congratulations, my friend! (*Holds out hand most cordially.*)

PEEP. (*After a pause holds out hand*) Much obliged, Mr. Sublette.

SUBLETTE. I suppose you don't want to clean out my office any more?

JUDGE. As I understand it, Mr. O'Day is contemplating retirin' from business.

SUBLETTE. (*Suavely*) Hum! Now if there is anything I can do for you in my capacity—I'm always glad to serve old friends.

PEEP. Well, I reckon the Jedge—

SUBLETTE. (*Politely concealing his disappointment*) Fine—splendid! Couldn't have a better adviser than our honored Judge. Don't be a stranger, Peep. Drop into my office any time—any time at all. I'll wait for the Sergeant inside. (*Exits into office.*)

PEEP. (*Who has been turning something over in his mind*) Jedge—it'll be kinder nice ter jest set in the office where I useter work so hard.

JUDGE. (*Sits R.*) Peep, now that you're rich, I imagine you'll find more true and devoted friends in this town than you ever thought of.

PEEP. I'll have lots of friends at last. Mighty fine.

JUDGE. But it can be overdone. (*Motioning PEEP to him.*) Peep, it's barely possible that some of your new crop of well-wishers will be making little business propositions to you. Now, that legal light, Mr. Sublette, is also a financier. Do you get my drift?

PEEP. Well, I'll tell Mr. Sublette that you are the only one that knows how I write my name. (*Pause*

—*shows dollar.*) Kin I go and spend all this money now, suh?

JUDGE. (*Laughs*) Sure—all of it.

PEEP. (*Edging toward exit L.I.*) Thank yer fer lettin' me have it ahead of time.

JUDGE. Don't mention it—Mr. O'Day.

PEEP. (*With bashful laugh*) And Jedge—if yer don't mind, I'd rather yer kept on callin' me Peep. (*Looks at dollar, laughs nervously and exits L.I.* BAGBY backs on L.I, looking after PEEP.)

JUDGE. Hello, Sergeant! Bought yer axle grease?

BAGBY. Yep!

JUDGE. Guess yer forgot ter bring it back with you, didn't you?

BAGBY. (*Embarrassed*) Old Peep is acting mighty queer, Jedge—ain't he?

JUDGE. Jimmy, suppose you was well over sixty—never had nothin' in yer life and you got yer first dollar. What do you reckon you'd do?

BAGBY. (*With assumed nonchalance*) John D. Rockefeller says put most of it in the bank.

(DR. WELLS enters L.I with angry glance in PEEP's direction.)

DR. WELLS. Somebody better git a rope and tie that man, Judge.

JUDGE. What's the matter, Doc?

WELLS. Why, that O'Day feller. He's runnin' wild, ter say the least.

JUDGE. Well, I guess his feelin's is unbridled frum gettin' rich so sudden.

WELLS. Oh! Then that story is true. (JUDGE nods.)

BRECK. (*Enters wildly L., followed by BELL*) Jedge—Jedge! Peep O'Day—

JUDGE. Yep. What about him?

BRECK. He's runnin' in and out of every place on Main Street.

JUDGE. Breck, be careful. 'Tain't fer the likes of us ter criticize one of our leadin' citizens.

WELLS. Does he drink that you know of?

BRECK. Never noticed it before, but he acts like it.

BELL. (*Who has entered with BRECK, laughs loudly*) Sergeant Bagby ain't never paid Peep enough wages ter buy a drink.

BRECK. Reckin I better go and fetch him, Jedge.

JUDGE. Reckin he kin do his own fetchin'.

SUBLETTE. (*Entering from office, followed by MRS. HUNTER*) Hello—hello! What's up here?

BRECK. Peep O'Day's gone clean outer his mind.

SUBLETTE. (*This remark makes impression on him*) How do you mean?

MRS. HUNTER. He's buyin' things like he was rich.

JUDGE. And why not?

BRECK. But Peep O'Day?

JUDGE. Exactly, Peep O'Day.

BRECK. People is jest givin' him things hand over fist.

MRS. HUNTER. Looks like he's buyin' the whole town.

JEFF. (*Running on L.I, wild-eyed, carrying two sacks of feed easily*) Jedge—Jedge! Mah Lawdy, Jedge! Peep O'Day's gone crazy!

BRECK. What's the matter with you?

JEFF. Peep O'Day gave me ten cents. (*He exits into stable.*)

BAGBY. Good heavens!

LUCY. (*Rushes on with TOM R.I*) Oh, Judge! —if he stole the money I'll make it up. How much is it?

JUDGE. Good Lord! They've got him stealin' money now.

BRECK. I better fetch him, Jedge, afore it's too late.

BAGBY. Quarles—keep your mouth shet.

WELLS. But look at him, Jedge. The foolish things he's doin'.

MRS. HUNTER. (*Angrily to WELLS*) Some folks is foolish so much we don't notice 'em. (*Boys shout off.*)

SUBLETTE. Wait a minute. Hold on!

(*All stand silently. PEEP enters with group of boys. His hat is in his hands, filled with peanuts, bananas, ice cream cones, gingersnaps and cookies. He notices nobody. Crosses to JUDGE's seat, where he sits. Places hat on ground. Boys help themselves. He peels a red banana, then a yellow one, and starts biting them alternately.*)

LUCY. (*After pause, goes to PEEP with TOM*)
Peep——

(*PEEP looks at them with loving eyes—gives each a red banana, but his mouth is too full for speech.*)

SUBLETTE. Oddest thing I ever saw!

JUDGE. No, it ain't.

BRECK. Peep, what do you think you're doing?

PEEP. I don't think—I *knows*. (*Resumes his eating.*)

CURTAIN



"BOYS WILL BE BOYS"

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ACT II

SCENE: *Interior of old schoolhouse. Two large windows R. and L. at back set in alcoves with steps leading up. All the panes have been broken. There is a door C. leading into cellar. Doors R.U. and L.U. Exterior backing L.U., interior R.U. The side walls have jogs. The teacher's platform is set just below L. jog. High old-fashioned teacher's desk on platform. School bench in front of platform up and down stage: Bench L.C.—table R.C. with stools around it. Several chairs and boxes. The room is festooned with bunting. Blackboard on stand. Over cellar door is a sign reading "Peep's First Birthday."*

DISCOVERED: WILLIE at blackboard finishing a sign reading, "Hooray fer Peep O'Day." Other boys are laughing and applauding. All the boys have red committeeman's badges.

WILLIE. There—how's that?

BOY. Great, Willie. Where's Peep gone ter?

WILLIE. He was here a minute ago.

BOY. (*Runs on with a banner reading, "Peep's Pals Kermittee"*) Look, fellers—look what I got.

WILLIE. That's the stuff. Now I reckon Mrs. Hunter will know who is running this here party,

JEFF. (*Enters from cellar c.*) Hay——

WILLIE. What do you want, Jeff?

JEFF. Ain't the circus cum yet?

WILLIE. It'll be here in half an hour. Jest cummin' up from Honeyville.

ALL. Hooray!

BOYS WILL BE BOYS

JEFF. Good Lord, I must git the worms!

WILLIE. What are ye doin' in the cellar?

JEFF. I done get the worms.

(Boys laugh.)

JEFF. Yah. Jedge Priest he done keep his bait down hyah—ter fish with. Peep O'Day he put in lots er worms ter git fat up. Peep O'Day asked me ter go to the circus with you 'uns. He was here a little bit ago. He goter put on his birthday clothes.

BOY. (*Bell heard off*) The ice-cream wagon!
(Boys all start.)

WILLIE. (*Stops them*) Hey, cum back. (*Bus.*) We gotter round up the rest of the fellers. Cum on.

JEFF. I must git the worms fer the Jedge.
(*Exits into cellar.*)

WILLIE. Now then, fellers, ready—forward, march! (*They exit, marching off R., pans and tin whistles for band.*)

(*After a pause PEEP enters stealthily from L.U. He looks about cautiously; goes to teacher's desk L. He is completely metamorphosed from preceding act. Has on his idea of jaunty clothes. Gets a package from desk and sets it on table R.C.—calls off L.U.*)

PEEP. Mr. Tom—Mr. Tom. (*Admires decorations.*)

TOM. (*Enters*) What's the answer, Peep?

PEEP. (*Indicates package on table R.C.*) A present.

TOM. Present?

PEEP. Present. Birthday present for you.

TOM. But it's *your* birthday.

PEEP. I reckon I kin do what I like with it, can't I? Some fellers gits presents on birthdays—some

gives 'em. Want ter see it afore the party? Folks'll be here in a minute.

(TOM looks through package and takes out blue envelope with red ribbon around it. Takes papers from envelope and looks at them in amazement.)

TOM. Where did you get these?

PEEP. Outer Mr. Sublette's safe.

TOM. You took them?

PEEP. I hooked them.

TOM. Yes—but——

PEEP. So you c'u'd win Mrs. Glaser's case.

JEFF. (*Enters c.*) Hello, Mr. Peep. I got the worms fer the Jedge. He go fishin'. I sure don't wanter miss that circus, Mr. Peep. (TOM glances sharply at JEFF and JEFF exits c.)

TOM. (*After looking anxiously at PEEP—looks over papers*) Mrs. Glaser—by God, I thought so! (*Pulls out two yellow documents. Looks at PEEP, who is beaming.*) Now I've got that—— (*Pauses—his expression changes—he becomes deadly serious*) Peep—do you know what you've done?

PEEP. I allow as I——

TOM. He can put you in jail for this——

PEEP. Jail?

TOM. Jail, Peep—if they discover this it's a felony—a penitentiary offense.

PEEP. But it's going ter make Miss Lucy happy. I ain't no account, nohow.

TOM. (*Looks at paper*) Good God! Lucy's father.

PEEP. Is he there?

TOM. In this thing with Sublette, and he's in deep, too. Peep, you've got to put those papers back.

PEEP. And I don't git my puppose?

TOM. If what's in this paper ever comes out, it will break Lucy's heart.

PEEP. Yer mean that her father is snarled up with Mr. Sublette?

TOM. Badly, Peep.

PEEP. Good Lord!

TOM. Now I know why he's fought me. Sublette has him hooked. That's why he's sick.

PEEP. And me a-thinkin' I was helpin' her.

TOM. (*Determinedly*) I've got to back out of this case.

PEEP. Mr. Tom!

TOM. Put them back at once.

PEEP. In the safe, Mr. Tom?

TOM. (*Looks around—gives PEEP bundle*) Yes.

PEEP. I waited a month fer a chancet ter git 'em.

TOM. If the safe is locked, put them on top of it or under it, and hide them until you get the chance. Maybe I'd better——

PEEP. No—no, Mr. Tom—no——

TOM. Be quick, Peep. If he should miss them, it means jail for you and disgrace for Lucy.

PEEP. It looks as if when a feller does right it allus turns out wrong.

TOM. Yes—that's one of the hard things about this world, Peep. (*Crosses L.*)

PEEP. I'll git' em back, suh—even if I have ter miss the circus—mebbe——

(SUBLETTE'S and WELLS' voices heard off.)

TOM. Quick! Folks are coming. Yes—and Sublette too—there's your chance, Peep.

PEEP. I'll cut across the back. (*Exits L.*)

(TOM is alone for a minute—thinks. Laughter and voices off. SUBLETTE enters with DOCTOR

WELLS. *Looks across schoolroom—doesn't notice TOM at first.*)

SUBLETTE. Judge don't seem to be here, Doctor. Howdye, Mr. Minor.

TOM. Mr. Sublette—Doctor. So you are coming to the party, too?

SUBLETTE. Yes, I've locked up my office for the day. Where's our genial host?

WELLS. Peep is getting popular when Mr. Sublette neglects business on his account.

TOM. *(Anxious and troubled)* Yes—that's very true. That's right.

SUBLETTE. *(Looks inquiringly)* Have you seen the Judge?

TOM. The Judge?

SUBLETTE. Yes, I want him. An important development.

TOM. He has an important development—he's gone fishing.

SUBLETTE. Fishing?

TOM. Holiday, you know.

SUBLETTE. Holiday?

TOM. Peep's official birthday—unanimously proclaimed. Sorry for your sake he is not here to greet you. *(Exits laughing.)*

WELLS. What's the matter with that feller?

SUBLETTE. Reckin he's found out figthing me isn't a paying job.

WELLS. *(Crosses to L.)* I'd like to find something in this town that is a paying job.

SUBLETTE. *(Crosses to WELLS)* Let's talk about that. Have you thought what a progressive man could do with Peep O'Day's money?

WELLS. But if he ain't got it and Peep won't give it to him? *(Sits on bench L.)*

SUBLETTE. Your trouble, Wells, is that you have small-town ideas.

WELLS. I suppose the Lord measured me to the size of the town.

SUBLETTE. I won't contradict you there. Here's an old fool with forty thousand dollars to throw away on a lot of boys. Now how much do you suppose it will cost him to take all those children to the circus this afternoon? Paying nine hundred dollars for this old school an' bringing round a gang of boys to break the windows isn't good sense—is it?

WELLS. Reckin anybody reading that story of Peep's going's-on that was printed in the Cincinnati papers would think nobody in this town had good sense.

SUBLETTE. That story served its purpose, all right.

WELLS. Yeh?

SUBLETTE. Yes. It brought out the fact that Peep O'Day has kin folk.

WELLS. Is that so?

SUBLETTE. Yes. I know the lady.

WELLS. Why, how did you——

SUBLETTE. There are ways of finding out things if one has brains. The young woman is a manicurist by profession.

WELLS. Seems ter me I've heard of them kinder wimmen.

SUBLETTE. And *somebody* told her to take her story to an alienist up there and get his opinion that Peep O'Day is crazy.

WELLS. (*Looking at SUBLETTE*) Oh! I see. (*Rises.*)

SUBLETTE. So you see our case is easy.

WELLS. Did I understand you to say *our* case?

SUBLETTE. I'm talking business. The Cincinnati girl has no money. Now if her rich relative is proved insane—— (*Gesture indicating "there you are."*) You know *you're* not making a fortune curing malaria and measles.

WELLS. Nope. Fancy sickness ain't prevalent here.

SUBLETTE. I should imagine a doctor on a case of a rich man's sanity would make money if he decided the right way.

WELLS. (*Cautiously*) If *you* was a doctor on a case like that, how much do you reckon you'd charge?

SUBLETTE. Well—I think five hundred dollars would be fair.

WELLS. Suppose the other side thought it was worth more? (SUBLETTE *glances at him.*) I wouldn't want ter be dishonest and betray the people that paid me the most. (*Crosses to L.*)

SUBLETTE. Well——

(JEFF enters c. *They do not see him and he exits c.*)

SUBLETTE. (*To WELLS*) Suppose you come over to my office tonight about ten and we can arrange the matter on a five hundred dollar basis.

WELLS. Suppose *Tom Minor* don't happen to think Peep is sick?

SUBLETTE. Oh! If I ever get anything on that young man he'll leave town in a hurry.

WELLS. But the Jedge——

SUBLETTE. Bah! Judge Priest's brains have been asleep for twenty years.

WELLS. Well—of course I don't want'er git mixed up——

SUBLETTE. Listen—we've got plenty of evidence—the Judge is bound to consult you. I'll see to that.

WELLS. Hum! Well—I don't think five hundred dollars is enough for me.

SUBLETTE. (*Half angrily*) What are you trying to do?

WELLS. Why should I sell my honor for five hun-

dred dollars when I think I orter get seven hundred and fifty dollars?

SUBLETTE. (*Pauses*) Hum! All right. The Judge is fishing—I must send for him. (*Goes up to window.*)

WELLS. What do yer want him for?

SUBLETTE. To sign a writ of restraint.

WELLS. Restraint?

SUBLETTE. Peep—yes. His niece thinks he's been wasting her money. She's got to get that one o'clock back.

WELLS. She's in town?

SUBLETTE. Got in this morning. She's over at the hotel.

WELLS. And you're going to push it through?

SUBLETTE. Nothing surer. (*Starts for door R.U.*)

WELLS. But the Judge?

SUBLETTE. Judge Priest's brains have been asleep for twenty years, I tell you. Come on—— (*They exit, talking ad lib., R.U.*)

(JEFF enters C. cautiously, with pail of bait. Rushes to R.U., looking off.)

TOM. (*Enters L.U. anxiously—sees JEFF*) Jeff, has Peep come back?

JEFF. (*Excited*) Good Lawd, Mr. Tom!

TOM. What's the matter with you?

JEFF. Peep O'Day is sick with craziness.

TOM. What?

JEFF. I hear Mr. Sublette tell Doctor Wells he must cure him.

TOM. (*Goes to JEFF—looks at him—walks back R.*) I'm afraid your hearing isn't good, Jeff.

JEFF. And he says, too, that the Jedge's brains have been asleep for thirty years.

TOM. (*Laughingly*) What, Jeff?



"BOYS WILL BE BOYS"

A Scene from 2nd Act

JEFF. He say Jedge Priest's brains has been asleep fer twenty—fer forty years.

TOM. Sublette said that?

JEFF. He sure did, Mr. Tom.

TOM. (*Crosses to L. in thought*) The Judge is fishing, isn't he?

JEFF. (*Crossing R. slowly*) Yes, suh. I was jest rushin' with this bait.

TOM. Don't forget to tell him what Mr. Sublette said.

JEFF. He says his brains has been asleep fer fifty years. (*Talking ad lib. exits R.*)

(*Voices and merriment heard off—cheers.*)

BOY. (*Outside*) There's Peep.

WILLIE. (*Entering*) Where you been, Peep? (*PEEP appears on outside window L. at back.*) Hooray fer Peep's birthday! (*Boys shout "Tiger!"—more shouts.*) Cum on and play with us, Peep—we're havin' lots of fun.

(*Shouts heard off—"Hooray fer Peep!" "Cum on, Peep!" etc.*)

PEEP. Go ahead, fellers—I'll be with you in a minute. (*Carries on bundle—meets TOM.*) Couldn't git in the office nohow, Mr. Tom.

TOM. I know. He's locked up.

PEEP. I'll watch the fust chancet.

TOM. Hide 'em now, Peep. (*Starts to do so.*)

PEEP. Mebbe I better keep the one about Lucy's father special, Mr. Tom, in case— (*Unrolls package and TOM selects the paper as he speaks.*)

TOM. Yes—perhaps you'd better. (*Voices heard approaching. PEEP starts to put balance of papers in desk.*) Quick, Peep.

LUCY. (*Enters R.U.*) Ah! Here you are—you

two conspirators. (*They look guilty.*) What have you two been doing? (*Looks from one to the other.*)

PEEP. Nothin'. Nothin' at all, Miss Lucy.

LUCY. What are you hiding there?

PEEP. Good Lord, Miss Lucy—I ain't hidin' things. This hyah jest a package of nothin' at all.

LUCY. Is that it? Heavens, you look as if you'd killed someone. Both of you. (*Makes comic shudder. TOM turns away. She looks at PEEP and laughs. He is fearful—shuffles, etc. She goes over to PEEP and hugs him. Turns him around.*) Turn around and let me see your new suit.

PEEP. (*Referring to suit*) Willie Bagby picked this out. (*Touches vest, which is a bit loud in color.*) Jeff picked out this—

LUCY. You dear old thing. Many happy returns of the day! You look like a regular Beau Brummel.

PEEP. Huh! I thought I looked nice.

LUCY. (*To TOM*) What's on *your* mind?

TOM. You—I reckon—

LUCY. Now Tom, dear—please. We've talked this all over before.

PEEP. (*Who has been trying to get papers back in envelope*) Aw, Miss Lucy—me and Mr. Tom was jest talkin' about yer.

LUCY. (*Looks at envelope—pause*) What's this? (*Looks closely at envelope.*) Mr. Sublette— (*Turns to TOM.*) So that's it. Mrs. Glaser's deeds in the big blue envelope—in Mr. Sublette's safe—

PEEP. 'Tain't no fault of his'n.

LUCY. (*Quickly*) Tom Minor— (*Slowly and intensely*) You got Peep to—

TOM. No.

PEEP. No, Miss Lucy—I hooked 'em my own self. And if yer don't stop me, yer daddy—

TOM. Peep—

LUCY. (*To TOM*) So you're still trying to injure my father. You've even gone so far as to steal——

PEEP. No. 'Twas me went that fur——

LUCY. Then you must put that back——

TOM. I'll do that. I'll hand them to Sublette myself.

LUCY. No——

TOM. Lucy, you don't——

PEEP. Youse wrong, Miss Lucy——

TOM. Yes——

LUCY. I'm not, Mr. Minor——

PEEP. Aw, Miss Lucy—call him Tom ag'in—please. Don't yer see what it all is ter me?

LUCY. I'm afraid I can't, Peep.

TOM. (*With quiet intensity*) Lucy—some day—some time you may find out just what has happened and why. I—I can't tell you, dear. I rather lose everything than have to tell you—and I won't—not even if it's good-bye. (*Exits slowly R.U.*)

(PEEP *puts envelope in wallet and puts same in his inside coat pocket.*)

LUCY. (*Looks at PEEP, who stands there sadly*) Don't you think you're behaving badly?

PEEP. Well—it's the fust birthday I ever had—and——

LUCY. Is this the way to enjoy it?

PEEP. I thought it was—but somehow—now—I've sort er lost my taste fer it. But don't you worry, honey—I'll bring these back to Mr. Sublette.

LUCY. Peep—you're just a boy.

PEEP. Yes—old boy, on the first birthday he's ever know'd.

LUCY. Don't you think you're going a long way just to have fun.

PEEP. Yes'um. Yer see, I'm tryin' ter ketch up.

LUCY. You're spending a lot of money——

PEEP. What kin I do? You won't take none—Mr. Tom won't take none, and I can't have my purpose. Wait—I wanter show yer somethin', honey—*(Runs to desk, which he opens and brings out a bundle.)* Look——

LUCY. *(Opens bundle, disclosing a pair of red-topped boots with brass toes)* A pair of red-topped boots with brass toes! But why don't you wear them? I've never seen them——

PEEP. Well, I've only been wearin' them nights.

LUCY. *(Takes his ear and leads him to bench at front of desk)* Peep, you're a baby. I'm afraid I'll have to scold you. Make faces at you as you did at me in the cradle.

PEEP. I reckon.

LUCY. It's all very well to spend a little money for fun—but, Peep, you're reckless, you're a waster.

PEEP. *(Takes out watch—holds it to her ear—chuckles)* Folks wouldn't let me be like them—so I jes' naturally be like myself.

LUCY. I've a good mind not to let you go to that circus. People will say that your money has gone to your head—and that would hurt *me*. This party is all very well—it's your birthday and all that—but getting the circus to come here! *(Boys laugh off.)*

PEEP. The kids is havin' bully fun and that's worth a lot to me. And the circus—please let me go this oncet, Miss Lucy. All my life I hear tell of a circus and I ain't never seen one. Nearest I ever got, I see the big wagons pass 'way off and I hear the whistlin' music of the calio—calio——

LUCY. The caliope?

PEEP. Yes—I reckon. Please let me go to the circus this oncet, Miss Lucy.

LUCY. But, Peep, why take the whole town?
(Crosses to L.)

PEEP. Mebbe some of the little fellers ain't never seen a circus—so I better take 'em all.

WILLIE. (*With two other boys appears at window L. at back*) Peep—Peep! Where are yer? The fellers want yer ter play short-stop.

PEEP. (*Anxious to get away—takes boots under arm*) All right, fellers. (*Speaking in an embarrassed manner as he edges toward window*) Yer don't mind if I plays short-stop, does yer, Miss Lucy? (*With coaxing smile*) Yer ain't mad with me, is yer—is yer? (*Ad lib. as he nears window.*) Cum on, fellers! I'se been let out. (*Runs out window and disappears with boys. LUCY sighs anxiously.*)

MRS. HUNTER. (*Enters with BRECK*) You may not believe it, Mr. Quarles, but yer fust marriage teaches yer ter be mighty scrutinizin' about yer other ones. (*Sees LUCY and comes to her.*) Well—well, Miss Lucy, what do yer think of my decorations?

LUCY. They ought to satisfy a man of Peep's simple tastes.

BRECK. (*Aiming remark at MRS. HUNTER from R. of R. table*) Peep's simple tastes seem ter be satisfied more ways than one.

(MRS. HUNTER glares at BRECK and he moves up toward door.)

LUCY. Enjoying the party, Mr. Quarles?

BRECK. (*At MRS. HUNTER*) Yep. I just love ter look at anybody's simple tastes.

MRS. HUNTER. It takes more'n a sheriff's badge ter dazzle me.

BRECK. Reckin some of us is gittin' too old ter notice bright objects.

MRS. HUNTER. (*Furiously*) You clear outer here, you—

BRECK. Sheriff don't have ter clear outer no place.

MRS. HUNTER. Miss Lucy, where's Paul Felix?

LUCY. Paul Felix? (BRECK *groans*.)

MRS. HUNTER. It's about time somebody called Mr. O'Day by his Christian name.

BRECK. Leave it ter you ter be the fust.

LUCY. Peep isn't falling in love, is he?

MRS. HUNTER. Fallin' in? He's in now and the door is shut. (LUCY *laughs softly to herself*.)

BRECK. So you think yer goin' ter be married? Again?

MRS. HUNTER. (*Drapes flag on desk L.*) The fust time I married fer love. Now I'm goin' at it more intelligent.

LUCY. Does Peep understand?

MRS. HUNTER. He don't need to. That's the woman's business.

BRECK. Guess he ain't axed you yet, though.

MRS. HUNTER. He's actin' scared of me.

BRECK. I'll bet he is.

MRS. HUNTER. Breck Quarles, that's the most unfailin'est sign of all. (*School-bell heard—and crash of stones falling on the roof. Shouts outside. Runs to window R. at back.*) It's Paul Felix and them boys throwin' rocks at the bell—(*Calls out of window*) Paul Felix—put down that rock—put it down—(*Pause—bell heard again—more rocks—shouts.*) Willie Bagby, stop puttin' him up ter that. Paul Felix, cum in here a minute—I want see yer. (*Boys all laugh.*) Breck Quarles—if you don't believe in unfailin' signs, jest open your eyes.

(*Boys shout, "Don't go in, Peep!" "Don't go in!"*)

PEEP *enters R.U. like a guilty schoolboy—stands twirling hat in hand, bashfully. He is now wearing the boots.*)

MRS. HUNTER. I thought I told yer there was ter be no rock throwin' at this party.

PEEP. Well, the fellers started ter throw—they dared me—and—and I hit it with my fust one.

MRS. HUNTER. What did yer buy this school-house for?

PEEP. Jest ter bust it up. The boys all say bust-in' schoolhouse winders is the best kinder fun.

MRS. HUNTER. Where yer been all this time—and the ice cream a-meltin'? And look at your necktie—and me payin' twenty-eight cents fer it? (*Crosses to him and starts adjusting tie.*) Lord sakes, a body 'u'd think yer had no one ter look after yer. (*PEEP winks sheepishly at LUCY over MRS. HUNTER'S shoulder.*)

WILLIE. (*At window L. at back—other boys are with him*) See if the back of his ears is washed. (*Starts to enter.*)

MRS. HUNTER. You cum in by the door.

WILLIE. Aw—I'm in now.

MRS. HUNTER. Do as I say, Willie Bagby!

WILLIE. It's Peep's party, ain't it? (*Looks at PEEP.*)

PEEP. (*Shifts uneasily from one foot to the other and finally quails under MRS. HUNTER'S gaze*) Better do as she tells yer, fellers.

WILLIE. (*Cornet is heard off R.*) The circus—the circus is comin'!

(*They rush off, followed by others except PEEP. Cheers heard outside. PEEP is about to go. Thinks of papers. Is going to desk when MRS. HUNTER returns from R.U. and stops him. She re-enters and her eye falls on PEEP, who has just reached the desk. He stops—she beams on him—he comes to bench L.C. and sits sheepishly.*)

MRS. HUNTER. Paul Felix—Paul Felix O'Day—you heard me. (PEEP *nods, embarrassed.*) We are alone by ourselves.

PEEP. Awful—ain't it?

MRS. HUNTER. (*Sits R. of PEEP*) You silly boy—— (*Laughs. Voices and shouts outside. PEEP starts to go. She catches his coat and pulls him back.*) Paul Felix—you rogue—— (*They sit on bench. PEEP R.—MRS. HUNTER L.*) Feel kinder 'shamed?—havin' me talked about?

PEEP. Talked about?

MRS. HUNTER. Folks is sayin' as how yer in love with me.

PEEP. Will it do any good if I tell 'em I ain't?

MRS. HUNTER. Paul Felix—and me a widder and can't be too keerful.

PEEP. If it hurts that much, I'm glad I ain't no widder.

MRS. HUNTER. (*Sighs. Bugle heard off. As PEEP starts for door*) Where are you goin'?

PEEP. The ice cream may be gettin' cold.

MRS. HUNTER. Come here. If yer must talk ter wimmen, choose them as yer kin confide in. They's allus *one*.

PEEP. One's enough, too, I reckon. I mean I never knowed there was more'n one kinder female wimmen.

MRS. HUNTER. All wimmen is jest plain wimmen—exceptin' widders.

PEEP. And widders is the best? (*Pleased.*) It 'u'd take me about twenty years ter find out all about wimmin, wouldn't it?

MRS. HUNTER. Why don't yer git married and find out all at oncet?

PEEP. Some day when I ain't got nothin' to do. (*She glares at him. He stops short and sits R. of her.*)

MRS. HUNTER. Love don't stay perched on no

man's doorstep very long. Why don't yer git married *now*?

PEEP. I wanter sow all my wild oats fust. Yer see, I never did bust out till jest lately. (*Brightly looking at decorations.*)

MRS. HUNTER. There's nothin' better than a knowin' woman ter save a man what's wild.

PEEP. She'd have ter be mighty knowin' ter save me. I'm apt ter have a wildness cum over me any time. (*Trumpets heard off.*)

WILLIE. (*Enters R.U.*) Peep—Peep—the circus is down at Selman's Bridge and will be here in a half-hour. Cum on out.

PEEP. All right. (*Starts to go.* MRS. HUNTER catches him.)

WILLIE. Cum on—— (*Exits R.U.*)

PEEP. I'm cummin'. (*She pulls him.*) No, I can't cum. I'm hitched. (*She pulls him back on seat.*)

MRS. HUNTER. (*With assumed pathos*) Is that nice of you—hurtin' my feelin's—— (*She cries.*)

PEEP. (*Anxiously*) Lawdy—I didn't mean ter do that. Kin I fetch yer somethin'—a ham sandwich?

MRS. HUNTER. No, don't—my heart is too full. I couldn't eat. I'm all choked up.

PEEP. Don't—not here. Wait till yer git home. I feel mighty sorry seein' yer cry. I sure do, Mrs. Hunter.

MRS. HUNTER. I call you Paul Felix—— Nobody calls me by my fust name no more. Call me Lily.

PEEP. Lily—sure I ain't too forward—Lily? (*Chuckles bashfully.*)

MRS. HUNTER. (*Putting head on his shoulder*) Yer don't know how that sounds to a lonely woman.

PEEP. (*Very nervously, with a touch of pity for*

her) Lonely Lily—— (*Trumpets heard off—shouts.*) The fellers is wantin' me. (*Starts, but she holds him down.*)

MRS. HUNTER. Do you know what it means ter be lonely—what it is ter live alone? (*Bus. PEEP doesn't speak, but looks a lot.*) What it means after a long day's work and scrubbin' ter go alone to a dreary room with nobody but a cat ter keep yer company?

PEEP. Did yer ever try sleepin' with a horse?

MRS. HUNTER. Breck Quarles promised me a ring.

PEEP. You kin make him marry yer fer that, can't yer?

MRS. HUNTER. I don't wanter marry Breck Quarles—I'm goin' ter marry someone I'm in love with. (*PEEP gazes at her helplessly.*)

BRECK QUARLES. (*Enters R.U.*) Huh! Reckin this is two kinds of a picnic—public and private.

MRS. HUNTER. (*Airily*) That's our affair, Mr. Quarles.

BRECK. Keep right on. I guess they may be other folks interested. Leastways, I reckon I kin report progress. (*Noise heard off.*)

(*WILLIE enters with JEFF, window L. at back. PEEP is about to get away.*)

WILLIE. Peep—Peep. Ah! There you are and yer ain't havin' no fun with us at all. Cum on out.

MRS. HUNTER. (*To BRECK*) Are you tryin' ter insinuate somethin' with them there remarks?

BRECK. Looks as if I was, don't it? Some surprise party, eh? (*Starts to go.*)

MRS. HUNTER. (*Going after him*) Birthday party.

BRECK. Birthday—some folks oughter be tired of birthdays by now. (*She goes to him and scolds him*

in dumb show. They move off just outside door R.U. and gradually disappear.)

JEFF. (*Whispers*) Mr. Peep, ain't we goin' ter hook watermelons?

PEEP. Reckin I plum fergot. (*He beams.*) Yes—from Mr. Bell's place.

WILLIE. (*Excitedly*) Jest about time ter git some afore the circus starts.

JEFF. I know where they's a big fat one.

WILLIE. Cum on—Peep—the fellers is waitin'.

(SUBLETTE'S *voice off* R.3.)

PEEP. No, not that way—let's go out here. (*He and boys bolt as MRS. HUNTER and others come on. They exit L.U. MRS. HUNTER re-enters with BRECK and SUBLETTE.*)

SUBLETTE. Thought you said Peep was here. (*Crosses to c.*)

BRECK. He was a minute ago.

JUDGE. (*Heard off R.*) Cum right inside, young woman. Right inside.

SUBLETTE. The Judge, eh?

BRECK. Cummin' in. (*Looking off*) What in thunder——

JUDGE. (*Enters with KATIE on his arm to c.*) Well—well—well—what a distinguished gatherin' we have in honor of Mr. O'Day.

SUBLETTE. You are acquainted?

JUDGE. I met the young lady on the doorstep.

KATIE. And I fell. Always did like 'em stout and genial.

JUDGE. I haven't the honor, however.

SUBLETTE. Miss O'Day—Judge Priest.

KATIE. Katie to my friends, Your Honor—only my rivals call me Miss O'Day.

JUDGE. Frum Cincinnati, eh?

KATIE. That's my "little grey home in the West." I suppose you've heard my uncle speak of me!

JUDGE. Uncle?

KATIE. Uncle Peep.

JUDGE. (*Interested*) I'm to understand that you are Mr. O'Day's niece?

KATIE. Your understanding is perfect, Your Honor.

MRS. HUNTER. (*Assertively*) He ain't no uncle of yours!

KATIE. (*Crossing L.*) Won't someone present me to the village vamp?

MRS. HUNTER. Don't you go insultin' me.

KATIE. Is *that* possible?

MRS. HUNTER. He ain't no kin of yours, he ain't——

KATIE. Sweetheart—I hate to blast your golden dreams—but my attorney will dispel any doubt in your troubled mind.

MRS. HUNTER. I don't allow no such painted creature to——

KATIE. Better get used to it, lovie—better get used to it. (*MRS. HUNTER is furious.*)

BRECK. (*To MRS. HUNTER*) Things is lookin' black and gloomy fer yer weddin'.

KATIE. What's that you said, Zeke—wedding? Is she—— (*To MRS. HUNTER*) Why, you giddy young thing.

BRECK. Don't take more'n one eye ter see——

KATIE. See the lay—and the other eye to see that you—— Hark! as we say in Cincinnati, "I sense a plot!" Have no fear, Hiram, I'll be on my uncle's doorstep with a switch to drive the naughty little flirt away.

MRS. HUNTER. (*To JUDGE*) Tell that woman to git outer here.

JUDGE. (*Quietly to KATIE*) Have yer cum down ter help yer uncle celebrate?

KATIE. Judge, I'm afraid it's more serious than that. My uncle's health is causing me untold worry.

JUDGE. Indeed?

SUBLETTE. (*Exchanging glances with JUDGE*) Looks pretty bad, Judge.

BRECK. Lily Hunter seems ter think he's all right.

KATIE. No matter what they're like—if they've got the kale we want them.

JUDGE. (*Who has been thinking*) Oh! I see—Miss O'Day!

KATIE. Your Honor.

JUDGE. Would you care to be a trifle more specific?

KATIE. You see, Judge, I don't like the idea of my uncle throwing away his money.

JUDGE. I reckon that phase of the case causes the deepest concern.

(*Boys and PEEP heard off stage yelling, "All aboard for the watermelon patch!"*)

KATIE. (*Goes up to window*) Is that my poor uncle?

SUBLETTE. Yes—your uncle is going to the watermelon patch, Miss O'Day.

KATIE. Oh! It's too bad. It's too bad. (*Cries—sits on bench L.*)

MRS. HUNTER. Crocodile. (*Goes up to window.*)

SUBLETTE. (*Crosses R. to JUDGE*) Your Honor—duty is not always a pleasure. Miss O'Day must get the one o'clock train for Cincinnati and I have been looking for you to sign a bill of restraint.

JUDGE. Bill of restraint?

SUBLETTE. Miss O'Day wants her uncle put under restraint for examination.

JUDGE. Examination of what?

SUBLETTE. The answer is obvious, surely—mental examination.

JUDGE. You imply that Mr. O'Day is not of sound mind?

SUBLETTE. We declare that to be the case. (*Hands paper to JUDGE, who looks it over casually.*) We have abundant evidence.

(DR. WELLS *enters quietly.*)

JUDGE. Has Miss O'Day a special charge?

KATIE. Your Honor—a dozen. Look at him blowing the whole town—with my money, too.

JUDGE. Well, wealth brings social obligations.

SUBLETTE. Think of buying this old schoolhouse for the boys and breaking the windows.

JUDGE. Good Lord! That is bad. I busted two of 'em myself. Don't yer think I better be examined, too?

SUBLETTE. Oh! That's different, Judge. That was fun.

JUDGE. Fun? What's fun in one is sin in another? (*Turns to WELLS*) What do you think about it, Doc?

WELLS. (*To R. of JUDGE*) I hadn't thought much about it till I heard he hired that circus to come here. His actions are peculiar.

SUBLETTE. And look how he's wasting his money on those boys. Madness is too mild a name for it.

JUDGE. Well, them rich fellers has their notions. I read about a rich feller up North who gave a party to monkeys—but Peep is democratic and gives his parties to children. (*WELLS goes up back.*)

SUBLETTE. Well, Your Honor, this young lady *demand*s that her uncle be put under restraint for examination.

JUDGE. Oh! I see. Well, perhaps, after all—

(Pauses. Takes out pen and apparently is about to sign paper.)

KATIE. I knew you'd see it that way, Judge. This is simply breaking my heart.

(BRECK holds out hand to JUDGE for the paper.)

JUDGE. *(After a shrewd glance at KATIE)* One minute, Sheriff. Reckin I won't break the lady's heart until I have ter. *(Puts paper in pocket.)*

(Loud shouts heard outside—all listen. Dog barks are heard. BAGBY runs on R.U., laughing wildly. At the height of the noise PEEP appears outside window L., watermelon under arm.)

PEEP. *(To boys)* Throw rocks at him, fellers—throw rocks at him—— Aw, don't hit him! *(Turns, sees people in room. Carefully hides melon outside window. Enters grinning.)*

JUDGE. *(Pause)* What's up, Peep?

PEEP. Had a race with a dog.

BRECK. Whose dog?

PEEP. Nick Bell's—fastest one in town—but I beat him. *(SUBLETTE and JUDGE exchange looks.)*

BRECK. What did the dog chase yer fer?

PEEP. 'Cause he couldn't ketch up with me.

(TOM enters with LUCY L.U. KATIE comes forward. PEEP sees her.)

SUBLETTE. *(Sees situation)* Perhaps you would like to know your niece—Miss Katie O'Day of Cincinnati—your next of kin and heir-at-law. *(TOM, LUCY and PEEP et al astounded. Pause.)*

KATIE. Uncle Peep—you dear old thing. Read all about you in the "Enquirer." What a dear old bean you are.

PEEP. You ain't no kin of mine, are ye?

KATIE. Why, bless yer dear old permanent wave—
—I'm your little niece from Cinci.

PEEP. Why——

SUBLETTE. Well, Peep, what do you think of
your niece?

PEEP. I'm thinkin' fast as I kin.

MRS. HUNTER. You planned a nice surprise for
his birthday, haven't yer?

KATIE. There, you waked him up.

MRS. HUNTER. Paul Felix—that woman is no kin
of yours, is she?

KATIE. What do you think of your poor rela-
tion, Nunky?

PEEP. I dunno. It's hard ter make up my mind.
(*Looks at TOM for help.*)

SUBLETTE. Perhaps we'd better make it up for
you. If Your Honor will sign that paper, I'll have
the Sheriff take Peep O'Day into custody at once.

(*Music. Consternation for TOM and LUCY, etc.*
Circus effect heard off—voices, etc. PEEP
moves to go. BRECK stops him.)

BRECK. Wait. (*Exits L.U.*)

JUDGE. (*Rising*) You are aware, Peep, that Mr.
Sublette wants you in custody of the sheriff?

PEEP. Am I arrested, Jedge?

JUDGE. Almost, Peep.

PEEP. What have I been doing?

JUDGE. Your niece thinks you're foolish with
your money. (*Sits on stool L. of R. table.*)

KATIE. (*To JUDGE*) Nunky will soon be cutting
out paper dolls.

PEEP. You think I've been actin' foolish?

JUDGE. Your niece thinks so. I dare say her at-
torney will try to prove her contention.

BAGBY. (*Bursting in*) Yer Honor, Peep ain't crazy—he ain't no more crazy than I am.

WELLS. How do you know *you* ain't?

BAGBY. Jest the same as I know you're a darned old fool.

JUDGE. Gentlemen!

PEEP. Jedge, I know all I'm doin'. I can't see no harm spendin' a little of my own money jest fer fun.

JUDGE. The contention seems ter be, Peep, that your niece and her attorney think they kin take better care of your money than you kin.

PEEP. Reckin. Give them the money, Jedge. 'Tain't no good except fer makin' the kids happy. I sure 'u'd like ter go ter that circus, though.

JUDGE. That's jest it, Peep. You can't have circusses when yer arrested.

JEFF. (*JEFF and one or two boys from door L.*) Say, Peep—the parade is cummin' up High Street and it's a dandy. There's a giraffe, wagons, and everything. Yes—and lions and tigers—and there's a camel, too. He goes nine days without a drink.

BAGBY. The tickets, Peep.

PEEP. (*Gives pack of tickets to BAGBY*) Sergeant, you hand the tickets out to the kids. Willie will help yer.

BRECK. (*Enters with WILLIE and another boy—they both have watermelons*) Come on, here—so you boys been stealin' melons! I want yer ter tell the Jedge where yer got 'em.

WILLIE. Aw, let me go, Mr. Quarles.

BRECK. Where'd you get them melons? Well—well?

WILLIE. Got 'em at Mr. Bell's place.

BRECK. From Mr. Bell?

WILLIE. Yes.

BRECK. Mr. Bell tell yer yer c'u'd have 'em?

WILLIE. No, sir. But Peep said——

SUBLETTE. (*Stepping out*) Willie—what did Peep say?

WILLIE. (*Sobbing*) He said it 'u'd be lots er fun ter hook 'em.

SUBLETTE. (*Turns to JUDGE with gesture*) He told you to steal them, did he?

WILLIE. Hookin' ain't stealin'.

BELL. (*Coming on L.U., laughing*) About the melons, Jedge—I kin tell yer. (*PEEP mysteriously beckons silence.*)

JUDGE. Well, Peep, what have yer to say?

TOM. Say nothing, Peep.

PEEP. Reckin' I better stop talkin' fer the day.

BAGBY. He kin take 'em back fer Nick, Jedge.

TOM. Isn't all this a bit ridiculous, Your Honor?

JUDGE. Mr. Minor, there is nothin' too trivial for the ear of Justice.

TOM. I'd like to know if it's a crime to be chased by a dog.

JEFF. A big dog done run after me——

JUDGE. Jeff——

JEFF. Jedge——

JUDGE. Shut up.

JEFF. Yes, suh. (*Turns up.*)

TOM. Suppose Peep did go with the boys to take these melons—what of it? He can pay for them.

BAGBY. Jedge—I——

TOM. Your Honor—surely that will satisfy Mr. Bell.

JUDGE. Mr. O'Day, give Sheriff Quarles enough money to settle for those melons. (*Caliope heard.*)

JEFF. (*Comes down to PEEP*) Mr. Peep—they's a dozen elephants in the parade.

BRECK. Dozen nothin'! I seen 'em—there ain't but three.

JEFF. Elephants is so big don't take but 'bout three of 'em to *make* a dozen.

(PEEP fumbles the wallet in which he has placed
SUBLETTE'S envelope.)

BRECK. (*Impatiently*) Come on—come on—you can't count—— (*Takes wallet from PEEP. The papers fall on floor—he picks envelope up, looks at it.*) Looks like this belongs to you, Mr. Sublette.

SUBLETTE. (*Takes envelope and looks inside*) Where did you get this?

TOM. Don't answer.

PEEP. Jest got it. (*Looks at TOM and LUCY sees look.*)

SUBLETTE. You took these from my safe.

JUDGE. (*Rising*) Did you take these from Mr. Sublette's safe?

SUBLETTE. He's been loafing round my office.

JUDGE. Peep—— (*TOM looks at PEEP.*)

SUBLETTE. He wouldn't want these for himself.

JUDGE. I don't quite——

SUBLETTE. Somebody put him up to this.

PEEP. No, they didn't.

SUBLETTE. (*Crosses to PEEP*) Peep, if you will tell me who got you to do this it may save you a year in jail.

PEEP. They ain't nothin' ter tell.

SUBLETTE. Miss Allen—did anybody advise Mr. O'Day——

PEEP. She don't know nothin'——

SUBLETTE. To rob my safe?

TOM. Let's see what was stolen—perhaps we can tell.

PEEP. (*Calls TOM'S attention to LUCY—TOM is silent*) No, Mr. Tom—no—no—no.

SUBLETTE. Is it necessary to disclose my professional secrets, Your Honor?

JUDGE. (*Looks at TOM*) If opening that envelope will help to clear up matters——

TOM. (*After pause*) Mr. Sublette is right, Your Honor.

LUCY. Mr. Sublette has charged Mr. O'Day with theft—we should know what it is he has stolen.

JUDGE. Miss Allen is right—— (*Reaches for paper. SUBLETTE hands it to him.*)

PEEP. (*Looks at LUCY and TOM—then bursts out*) Don't open it, Jedge—don't open it, for God's sake. I did rob Mr. Sublette's safe. I done it. I tuk them things. I'm a bad feller. (*Gives them to JUDGE.*) I tuk 'em—tuk 'em all. Nobody told me ter and nobody else had nothin' ter do with it. (*Pause.*)

JUDGE. (*Seals envelope*) Sheriff, file this away for evidence. I reckon yer kin act on this warrant now. (*He gives writ to BRECK, after signing name. BRECK touches PEEP on shoulder. Music heard off.*)

LUCY. Oh! Peep—what did you do?

PEEP. I had a puppose, Miss Lucy—and yer know what a feller will do when he has a puppose.

LUCY. (*With comprehension—looking at TOM*) You must tell them the whole truth, Peep—they've got to know it.

PEEP. (*Pulling her to him*) No—no, Miss Lucy. (*Listens to music.*) I'd like to see that animal that goes nine days without liquor.

LUCY. (*To TOM*) And you are going to have him take all the blame?

TOM. Lucy—listen to me—— (*LUCY turns L. to desk indignantly.*)

PEEP. (*Sees this—says to SHERIFF*) Mighty hard to keep things right, ain't it, Sheriff?

SUBLETTE. You see, Judge, how necessary this commitment is. I hope you will waste no time in appointing the commission to examine him.

TOM. Meantime, Your Honor, you will release him until the hearing.

JUDGE. If Mr. Sublette does not insist——

SUBLETTE. Under heavy bonds.

TOM. Your Honor, is he to be denied his freedom on the charge of a person whose identity is not proved?

JUDGE. I refer you to Mr. Sublette, Mr. Minor.

SUBLETTE. If he is given his freedom it should be under heavy bond.

TOM. My client is a rich man and can afford bail.

SUBLETTE. If you knew a little more about law, Mr. Minor, you would know that the document the Sheriff holds levies an attachment not only on the person of Mr. O'Day but on all his funds and property.

TOM. What is the amount of bail, Judge?

JUDGE. (*Looking at SUBLETTE*) I reckon a thousand dollars will be enough.

SUBLETTE. (*Nods*) In the meantime, I presume, Your Honor—the Sheriff knows his duty.

JUDGE. Yes. I reckon.

KATIE. Judge—don't let Hiram be too rough with him. (*Joins SUBLETTE and they both exit R.U.*)

BAGBY. Judge, I'll put up four wagons and one thoroughbred and three of my hosses as bail for Peep.

WELLS. (*As he exits*) I reckon the Sergeant 'u'd like ter have his nags fed at the expense of the county. (*Exits R.U.*)

BAGBY. Lucy, you c'u'd mebbe git yer paw ter do it.

LUCY. I'll see my father at once and beg him to do it. (*Exits R.U.*)

TOM. I'll see him and make him do it. (*Exits R.U.*)

JUDGE. Sheriff, stay here till Mr. Minor's return. (*Exits to R.U.*)

(*BELL looks at ticket and is about to exit.*)

BAGBY. Nick—where are yer goin'?

BELL. (*Hesitatingly*) Nowhere.

BAGBY. Wait a minute—I'll go with yer. (*They both exit R.U.*)

JEFF. (*After a pause approaches PEEP*) Mr. Peep—kin I have a ticket to the circus?

PEEP. Sure yer kin, Jeff. Sergeant'll give yer one. Sergeant— (*Looks around.*) They've all gone, I reckon. (*Takes ticket from pocket.*) Here, Jeff, I reckon yer kin have my one— (*Hands ticket to JEFF.*)

JEFF. Thank yer, Mr. Peep—thank yer— (*Exits R.U.*)

PEEP. (*Calls after him*) Jeff—tell the kiddies there's a bag of peanuts goes with every ticket.

JEFF. (*Off*) Yes, Mr. Peep.

(*The music grows louder. PEEP sees that BRECK is craning his neck out L. window in the direction of the music. PEEP steals quietly up to R. window and looks off.*)

BRECK. (*After a pause turns and misses PEEP*) Peep! Peep! (*PEEP smothers laugh and does not answer. BRECK runs off R.U. excitedly calling PEEP. PEEP runs to cellar door, and is about to exit when BRECK's voice stops him. He runs up into window L. Dashes on and sees cellar door open—runs down cellar yelling*) Peep—Peep—you down here— (*PEEP shuts door and puts up bar. Runs to bench L.C.—takes hat and runs off R.U.*)

CURTAIN

ACT III

Curtain rises on empty stage.

(TOM runs on. Not finding PEEP, he looks out window as LUCY enters. She looks up and sees him.)

LUCY. And that old man has been taken to jail—while the whole town enjoys itself at his expense.

TOM. (*Coming down*) You didn't see your father——

LUCY. No.

TOM. I thought so. Sublette got there first. However, I've seen the Judge.

LUCY. Did you tell him what was stolen and why?

TOM. No.

LUCY. Do you think it fair to hide things from me?

TOM. Fair to you—and everybody.

LUCY. We are that old man's purpose in life.

TOM. And you are mine.

LUCY. No, please. What are you going to do?

TOM. Fight. That old man won't be sent away. But I've got to think about other people, too.

LUCY. Other people?

TOM. Yes—there's you—more than anyone else in this world.

LUCY. But——

TOM. I'm in a battle, Lucy, and when a fellow is fighting you mustn't hang onto his arm. (*She sits.*) Lucy dear—don't you think there's something in

trusting a fellow and believing in him even if you don't understand his actions?

LUCY. If I only knew——

TOM. You can't know now, dear. But when the fight is on, how much stronger I will feel if I know you are standing with me—hoping for me——

LUCY. It would be sort of mean of me not to.

TOM. And you couldn't be mean, honey—you're not that kind. Just remember I'm doing all this for you—because I love you—don't you see?

LUCY. (*Rises and extends hand—they embrace*) I'm afraid someone is coming.

(*Voices outside. Tune, "Home, Sweet Home," indicating circus is over.*)

TOM. (*Listens*) I'm afraid you're right.

LUCY. (*As he releases her, goes up to window*) It's Mr. Sublette and Doctor Wells.

TOM. And the lady from Cincinnati? (*Lucy nods.*)

KATIE. (*Enters with SUBLETTE and WELLS—sees TOM*) Why, here's the little boy who speaks pieces in court.

SUBLETTE. Mr. Minor, I protest against this proceeding. It is highly irregular.

TOM. You'll have to see the Judge.

WELLS. Judge Priest here yet?

TOM. Haven't seen him.

SUBLETTE. Miss Lucy, I just had a little talk with your daddy.

LUCY. Yes, that is why we couldn't find him.

SUBLETTE. (*Eyes TOM*) A very interesting talk we had, too—very interesting. (*TOM and SUBLETTE look at each other. LUCY sees the glance and is puzzled.*)

NICK BELL. (*Enters*) I know, but what does he want us here for? Why not at his office? (*To*



"BOYS WILL BE BOYS"

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others) The Jedge ask you fellers ter cum here, too?

KATIE. (*Looking him over*) Heavens—here's little Charlie Chaplin.

BELL. Oh! I've heard 'bout you. How's things up in Cincinnati?

KATIE. Sweet and lovely—same as you.

BELL. I was up ter Cincinnati oncet when I was a young feller.

KATIE. Now I know who killed the morals of that town.

BELL. (*Leaving her*) I never was much given ter braggin'. (*Sits on bench R., against wall.*)

BAGBY. (*Outside*) Ain't the Jedge cum yet, son?

WELLS. Sergeant Bagby! Reckin the Jedge has invited the whole town.

BAGBY. (*Enters with military tread, carrying musket*) Howdye, folks.

WELLS. Hello, Sergeant.

BAGBY. Well—what's the fuss? Where's Billy Priest? He asked me ter cum here after the circus.

KATIE. What brigade is this?

BAGBY. My name's Bagby, ma'am—Sergeant Bagby. Late Kentucky Hell Hounds in the Army of the Confederacy. Now Quartermaster Gideon K. Irons Camp 29, C. S. A.

KATIE. And I thought the war was over.

BAGBY. Lady—no war was ever over as fur as I'm concerned. Where's Billy Priest? I want ter get home to supper. (*Crosses to R. and sits L. of BELL.*)

JUDGE. (*Enters, followed by JEFF, looks others over*) Well—looks like everybody's here.

SUBLETTE. All except the sheriff and the prisoner.

JUDGE. Well, this bein' the last place I saw those

two individuals, I thought it best to meet here and go into this matter of Peep's sanity in a neighborly fashion.

BAGBY. But Billy—this is camp-fire night—I want my supper.

JUDGE. This young lady wants to return to Cincinnati tonight—so I have no doubt you will accommodate your appetite to her wishes.

SUBLETTE. But Judge—I want the sanity of Peep O'Day to be passed on by a commission.

JUDGE. That is your right. But before appointing a commission I'd like to make sure that it's necessary; so I've asked some of our leading citizens to be present so that we can go over the thing informally—and sorter get each other's ideas. You know many a man's sanity is determined by his neighbors' point of view or limitations.

WELLS. I'll be glad to do all I kin, Jedge.

TOM. Your Honor, Dr. Wells is——

JUDGE. Is our leadin' physician—his opinion will be invaluable. (*Has arranged table and chair R.C., where he sits. Boys heard outside, laughing and talking as they approach.*)

WILLIE. (*Heard above others*) That clown was the funniest feller——

BOY. (*As they enter, PEEP in their midst, enjoying their tales*) And a pink lady jumped through a hoop that was on fire.

PEEP. (*Continuing conversation with boys*) Did yer count the monkeys?

WILLIE. Yep. Millions of 'em.

(*PEEP and boys continue conversation ad lib. They go to bench in front of platform. PEEP sits on down-stage end. Boys sit around him. Some on desk, some on bench, some on floor.*)

BRECK. (*Pounds loudly on cellar door*) Let me

out, somebody! (*JEFF takes bar from door and BRECK rushes on.*) Jedge—Jedge—the prisoner has escaped.

PEEP. No, I didn't—it was you.

BRECK. Where you been?

PEEP. I clumb up on the roof. C'u'd see the tops of the tents frum there.

BRECK. (*To boys who laugh*) Hush! Let's have dignity here!

JUDGE. Sheriff, have you those documents that were stolen from Mr. Sublette?

BRECK. (*Handing him documents*) Here they is, Jedge. (*Gives papers to JUDGE.*)

JUDGE. (*To SUBLETTE*) Proceed, sir.

SUBLETTE. (*Gives paper to JUDGE*) This will establish the validity of Miss O'Day's identity.

JUDGE. They appear to be properly attested and sworn to.

TOM. Judge, may I ask a question? (*JUDGE nods. To SUBLETTE*) Mr. Sublette, was my client in your employ at various times for one or two years previous to his good fortune?

SUBLETTE. He used to clean out my office, if that's what you mean.

TOM. Did you know then that he was mentally unsound?

SUBLETTE. Oh, I didn't give it much thought. I noticed that he was eccentric.

TOM. Did you pay him for his work?

SUBLETTE. Certainly I did.

TOM. How much did you pay him?

SUBLETTE. Oh, I used to give him a dime once in a while.

BELL. I should say that was enough to make anybody mad.

TOM. You will note that my learned friend did

not pause to take advantage of my client's weakness.

JUDGE. Mr. Minor.

SUBLETTE. You are familiar with this man's purchase of the schoolhouse; his hiring the circus; his racing with the dog; his proposals to Mrs. Hunter; his eluding the Sheriff—I will not dwell upon his *criminal* tendencies; nor will I prefer the charge of robbing my safe against him, as I do not consider him mentally responsible for this action.

JUDGE. A very commendable spirit of compassion.

SUBLETTE. Mrs. Lily Hunter? (MRS. HUNTER rises and goes to chair L.C., which TOM places for her.) If you please, Mrs. Hunter, you said Mr. O'Day made a proposal of marriage to you.

MRS. HUNTER. Well, I took it as sich.

SUBLETTE. Did he propose to you in words?

MRS. HUNTER. The language of love ain't allus words.

SUBLETTE. How did he act when you say he proposed to you?

MRS. HUNTER. Like he was in a daze.

SUBLETTE. He didn't appear to know what he was doing?

MRS. HUNTER. Come to think of it now, he did act kind o' flighty, like as if he didn't know what he was doin'.

PEEP. I didn't.

SUBLETTE. You see, he didn't know what he was doing when he asked a woman to marry him. (*Goes up stage.*)

BELL. I'd like to know what man ever did?

TOM. (*Comes forward*) You say, Mrs. Hunter, that Mr. O'Day did not propose to you in words. How did he propose?

MRS. HUNTER. He looked straight at me, friendly like,

TOM. Into your eyes?

MRS. HUNTER. Straight into 'em. He was so sad-looking.

TOM. How did you feel when he looked at you so sadly?

MRS. HUNTER. Kinder sort o' sympathetic.

TOM. You were probably standing several feet away from him at this time?

MRS. HUNTER. I was settin' right aside of him.

TOM. Where was your face when he looked into your eyes?

MRS. HUNTER. It was restin' right on his shoulder.

TOM. Did Mr. O'Day draw your head onto his shoulder?

MRS. HUNTER. I done it myself 'cause he looked so sad.

TOM. Mr. O'Day, what were you doing when her head was on your shoulder?

PEEP. I was thinkin' about the circus.

TOM. Did you ask him to say something—well, something sweet to you, do you remember?

MRS. HUNTER. Well, I asked him to call me by my fust name—Lily.

TOM. And did he?

MRS. HUNTER. (*Proudly*) He did. He called me Lonely Lily.

TOM. At her request he looked sadly into her eyes and called her Lonely Lily. (*PEEP smothers laugh.*)

SUBLETTE. *That* is the point I wanted to bring out. His weak mind yielded to the influence of another.

BAGEY. Don't see how a feller could help sayin' somethin' when a woman looked at him that-a-way.

TOM. Your Honor, I'd like to question Miss O'Day? (*MRS. HUNTER retires back.*)

JUDGE. Certainly.

TOM. Miss O'Day—just a question or two.

KATIE. Or three or four——

JUDGE. Miss O'Day—please answer Mr. Minor.

KATIE. Could any girl resist him? (*Sits L. of table.*)

TOM. You are here in Mr. O'Day's interest, because you say he is your uncle?

KATIE. Yes. (*To BELL, who has been looking at her intently*) What is it, old thing?

BELL. What's she say?

BAGBY. Damifino.

TOM. (*Looking over paper*) You are the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James O'Day?

KATIE. I am.

TOM. Have you always known Paul Felix O'Day to be your relative?

KATIE. I knew I had a relative somewhere. I read about Uncle Peep in the "Enquirer."

TOM. What then?

KATIE. It worried me so, I called on Doctor Redcliffe.

TOM. Who is Dr. Redcliffe?

KATIE. He's a brain specialist—the biggest in Ohio.

TOM. What did he say?

KATIE. He said my uncle was—coocoo.

BELL. What did she say?

BAGBY. Damifino.

JUDGE. Cuccoo? Could you translate that to us, Miss O'Day?

KATIE. Well, he said that my uncle's mind had broken away from the hitching-post.

SUBLETTE. (*Handing paper to JUDGE*) Here is Doctor Redcliffe's written opinion that Paul Felix O'Day is mentally unbalanced. Mr. Bell, didn't Mr. O'Day and those boys climb your fence and take your property from your premises?

BELL. Yep.

SUBLETTE. Are you going to prosecute him?

BELL. Nope.

SUBLETTE. Out of kindness?

BELL. Well, not exactly on that account. You see, Peep asked me to keep quiet about the whole thing.

SUBLETTE. Naturally—but why don't you prosecute him? Do you feel that he is irresponsible? (BELL *laughs loudly*.)

JUDGE. Answer the question, Mr. Bell.

BELL. How could I prosecute him when he paid for the melons?

SUBLETTE. You mean he made restitution afterwards?

BELL. Nope. He paid for the melons afore he tuk 'em.

SUBLETTE. Before he stole them?

BELL. Yep.

SUBLETTE. But you set your dog on him.

BELL. Peep asked me to—after he was a certain distance away. He wanted to make out to the boys as how he c'u'd run faster'n the dog. (*All laugh.*)

SUBLETTE. But they pelted stones at your dog.

BELL. Yep. I charged him five dollars extry fur that. (*All laugh. JUDGE raps for order.*)

BAGBY. Jedge, kin I horn in again?

JUDGE. It is understood that this hearing has a wide latitude. Proceed, Sergeant.

BAGBY. Seems to me *good sense* to pay fer what ye git.

SUBLETTE. But Mr. O'Day paid for them first and stole them afterwards.

WILLIE. We hooked 'em.

SUBLETTE. (*To boys—sharply*) Did you boys think of stealing the melons first, or did Mr. O'Day? (*Pause.*) Speak up, now.

WILLIE. (*Jumping up*) It was me, sir. I first thought of hookin' 'em.

SUBLETTE. (*To Commission*) You see, even a little boy influences his actions.

BAGBY. They wasn't no danger to Peep as long as the dog didn't catch up with him.

SUBLETTE. But the episode indicates a childish mind.

JUDGE. I reckon you mean second childhood, don't you? Now, as I understand it, everybody starts out with childhood, when he does as he pleases, then comes manhood, when he does as the law pleases, then on to second childhood, when he does as he pleases again. I am paraphrasing Shakespeare to some extent.

SUBLETTE. (*Firmly*) Right. And the man who is incapable of doing as the law pleases must be restrained by the law. An irresponsible man sixty years old is beyond all hope.

PEEP. You're about sixty, ain't yer, Jedge?

BAGBY. (*Jumps up in rage*) I'm sixty years old. What the hell wuz I brung here for?

JUDGE. I understand yer feelings, Sergeant. But when a man gits ter be sixty, his brains is apt ter git sleepy.

SUBLETTE. Your Honor has sound reasons for his actions. This man's actions are the senile promptings of second childhood.

TOM. Anything wrong in exercising the privileges of second childhood?

SUBLETTE. (*Quickly*) Robbing my safe at somebody's suggestion is nobody's privilege. (*TOM glares at him.*) Perhaps you can throw some light on the subject and help keep your client from an asylum for the criminally insane. (*TOM hesitates—sits.*)

JUDGE. (*Shrewdly*) I regret this acrimony between counsel.

BAGBY. But Billy—beg pardon, Jedge. While the



"BOYS WILL BE BOYS"

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lawyers is fightin', why don't Peep tell us about this melon business himself?

JUDGE. Mr. Paul Felix O'Day. (PEEP *stands—boys applaud. He is embarrassed.*) Why did you hook melons after payin' for them?

PEEP. Well, Jedge, Your Honor, yer see, I knowed watermelons tasted sweeter to a boy if he thought he hooked 'em. Lordy, what fun we did have—they a-thinkin' they was hookin' 'em and me a-knowin' they wasn't!

SUBLETTE. Did you feel very young when you were doing this?

PEEP. Jest like a boy—never had sich fun in my life.

BAGBY. Jest as you said oncet, Jedge—boys will be boys.

JUDGE. Would you do the same thing again?

PEEP. Well, I reckon I'd ask Nick Bell not ter let the dog loose quite so soon.

BRECK. (*To BELL, who laughs loudly*) Hush!

SUBLETTE. Then perhaps you can tell me why you robbed my safe. (*Down to c.*)

PEEP. I had a puppose. (*Pause.*) 'Sides—lots er fun. (*Sits.*)

SUBLETTE. Was that purpose your own or somebody else's?

PEEP. My pupposes is all my own.

SUBLETTE. (*Sharply*) What was your purpose in offering Mr. Minor five thousand dollars? (*Tom and others are amazed.*) I got this information from Miss Allen's father. Why did you try to give away this amount?

PEEP. Well, the Jedge said in his Fourth of July speech that this is the freest country what is.

SUBLETTE. I want your reason for doing it.

PEEP. So Mr. Tom c'u'd have enough money ter marry Miss Lucy.

SUBLETTE. (*Sharply*) Then the marriage of these two young people was your purpose in life?

PEEP. Yes, suh.

SUBLETTE. Had robbing my safe anything to do with that purpose?

PEEP. (*Startled*) Huh? (*Pause.*) No, suh—not with that one. (*Slyly*) Yer see, I had *two* pupposes.

SUBLETTE. What was the other one?

PEEP. Can't think of it jest now.

SUBLETTE. Can't think of it, yet you took a chance of going to jail for it?

PEEP. Yep—but I plum fergit my other puppose.

SUBLETTE. You forget it. This man doesn't know he committed burglary. (*To PEEP*) What did Mr. Minor ever do for you that you should offer him five thousand dollars?

PEEP. When he was a boy he useter play the harmonica fer me.

SUBLETTE. Did Mr. Minor take the money?

PEEP. No, suh. He refused.

BAGBY. Hum. One man offers another five thousand dollars and he refuses to take it. The question is—which is crazy?

SUBLETTE. Most decidedly, the man who offers it.

BELL. Would he be crazy if he offered it ter you? (*All laugh.*)

BRECK. Hush!

TOM. No, Mr. Sublette does not think so.

SUBLETTE. (*Angrily*) Now see here, Mr. Minor, you'll have to explain——

JUDGE. Gentlemen, in discussing the sanity of one man, don't raise any questions as to our own.

SUBLETTE. While on the subject of extravagance, how much did it cost you to take all these children to that circus today?

PEEP. Miss Lucy figgered it at two hundred dol-

lars. She was my seketary, she was, and we was gettin' on mighty fine till Mrs. Hunter says she was my manager—after that everything got fussed up.

SUBLETTE. You see, Judge, somebody else always doing his thinking. (*To PEEP*) When did you take my papers?

PEEP. The day afore my fust birthday.

SUBLETTE. Yesterday? Did anybody know you took them? (*PEEP is silent. SUBLETTE points to envelope on JUDGE's table*) You are sure your attorney didn't know?

TOM. Just a minute——

JUDGE. Gentlemen!

SUBLETTE. We may draw our own conclusion.

BAGBY. Mine's already drawn.

SUBLETTE. (*To PEEP*) You still forget your reason for robbing my safe?

PEEP. Jest put it down ter havin' some fun.

SUBLETTE. (*Suddenly*) Miss Allen—do you know anything about this robbery?

TOM. I object.

SUBLETTE. Naturally. If this man robbed me of his own volition, I claim he is criminally insane. If somebody put him up to it, that person is more to blame than he is.

JUDGE. (*After a pause*) Answer the question, Miss Lucy.

SUBLETTE. Miss Allen, do you know anything about this robbery?

LUCY. Why, no—I know nothing—I—— (*Half hysterically*) I can't—I can't. No matter what Peep did, he did it out of kindness. Please, Judge, look at those papers and you will see why he stole them——

JUDGE. (*Firmly*) Miss Lucy, I can't do that.

LUCY. Then I'll tell you myself.

TOM. (*Quickly*) No, Your Honor—it isn't

necessary. I can explain. I discussed this robbery with Peep O'Day.

SUBLETTE. (*Forcefully*) There, Your Honor. *He* dominated this weak-minded old man and utilized his criminal tendency for his personal ends. I demand his arrest.

PEEP. (*Wildly*) No, Jedge, no! He didn't have nothin' ter do with it. I tuk 'em my own self. Them children was my puppose in life, and I thought I was helpin' 'em—and—and now I've gone and busted it all.

KATIE. (*Rises, looks at PEEP, then at JUDGE*) Judge—— (*SUBLETTE motions her to be quiet.*)

JUDGE. (*Quietly—firmly*) The question of Mr. O'Day's sanity is the one before us.

TOM. Your Honor, Mr. O'Day has lived in this town over fifty years.

JUDGE. We know that. But he has sure messed up this community in the last fifty days——

BAGBY. But *we're* doin' all the talkin'. We ain't heard Peep say nothin' about hisself.

JUDGE. (*After a judicial pause—looks at PEEP*) Well, Mr. O'Day?

PEEP. Thank yer, Jedge—nobody seems ter understand—'cept Miss Lucy and Mr. Tom and mebbe some of the little kiddies hyah. I hed a puppose—a puppose in everythin' I did. There's some hyah as knows how I was raised and fetched up . . . My Maw and Paw died when I was little more'n a baby, so I was brung up in the old county po'house. Cayn't remember the time when I didn't hev to work hard for jest my board and keep—while other boys wuz goin' ter school and playin' games and sich—I hed ter work. I never knowed what it was till a while ago to hev my fill o' bananas and candy and sich knick-knacks. . . . All my life I've craved ter wear a pair of red-topped boots with brass toes onter 'em, same as I seed other boys wearin' in the winter time

when I was out yonder at the poorhouse—just a little feller—but a-wearin' a pair of men's cast-off shoes with rags wrapped round the toes ter keep the snow frum comin' in the cracks. . . . More'n oncet I got my toes frost-bit through wearin' them kind o' shoes—that's why I bought a pair o' red-topped boots the fust time I hed the price—and I got a heap of pleasure out o' doin' it, too. Ever sinct I was a boy I've been wantin' ter go ter a circus, but till terday I never hed no chanct. . . . Lots of the little fellers here hedn't never seen one nuther, and I didn't want no child in this town ter grow up to be my age 'thout seein' at least *one* circus, so I sent 'em all—and I paid the bills. . . . Some folks might think I wuz extravagant—well, mebbe I wuz—but the little fellers wuz happy, so I reckon I got my money's worth. . . . They may be bigger circuses than this one wuz, but frum what I hears I don't see how they could be any better. . . . I never said nuthin' like this ter nobody afore cos I was afraid folks wouldn't understand, and would jest nachally laff at me. . . . All these years I've had a hankerin' inside me—I've had a hankerin' ter be a boy and do the things a boy does—to do the things I wuz cheated outer doin' when I was a boy and oughter bin a-doin' 'em—so when this money cum ter me so suddenlike I started out ter make my dream come true—and I done it. I reckon that's why you think I'm crazy. . . . Well, I don't regret it none, and if I had ter do it all over again I'd do it just the same. You all say I'm in my second childhood . . . The way I look at it, a feller can't be in his *second* childhood 'lessen he's hed his *first* childhood, and I figger I was cheated plum outer mine. Every man is entitled ter bein' a boy oncet in his life. I'm more'n sixty years old, but I'm tryin' ter be one afore it's too late. I don't know what the law says is the right time fer bein' one—only

some fellers don't git no chanct to be boys when they is boys—so when the chanct does come ter be boys—they jest goes and bes 'em. (*Sits.*)

SUBLETTE. Everything he says confirms the written opinion of Doctor Redcliffe.

JUDGE. (*To WELLS*) Doctor, what do you think?

WELLS. I'm sorry for old Peep, but it's for his own good as well as the good of our people. As Mr. Sublette says, before sentiment comes duty. Besides, Doctor Redcliffe is one of the greatest alienists in this country and I can't fly in the face of his opinion.

BAGBY. Bah! Everybody is crazy about some-thin' or other. My wife tells me three times a week that I'm crazy. But if my way of doin' a thing works out all right, she allows I ain't as crazy as she thought I was.

SUBLETTE. The man is mentally incompetent.

BAGBY. I don't give a damn—— (*JUDGE tries to stop him.*) I don't give a damn, Billy Priest. I wouldn't say no man is crazy 'less he told me so hisself. (*Sits.*)

BELL. Judge—lots er things in this world look one way when they're 'tother. I give my wife a black eye oncet. Everyone thought I done it with my fist, but the fact is I done it by accident when she was tryin' ter kiss me.

SUBLETTE. Your Honor, I demand that you commit this old man—the evidence shows criminal insanity beyond a question of a doubt. (*Seated L. of table.*)

JUDGE. Mr. O'Day——

LUCY. Tom!

TOM. One moment, Your Honor—Jeff Poindex-ter.

JEFF. (*Comes forward*) Yes, suh.

TOM. You were in the cellar this afternoon?

JEFF. Yes, suh, gettin' the worms.

TOM. You saw Mr. Sublette and Doctor Wells?

JEFF. I cum upstairs and seed 'em and——

TOM. What were they talking about?

JEFF. Mr. Sublette say Peep O'Day was sick and he offer Dr. Wells five hundred dollars to cure him.

TOM. What did Dr. Wells say?

JEFF. That he couldn't cure him for less than seven hundred and fifty.

TOM. That's all, Jeff.

JEFF. Mr. Sublette say that the Jedge's brains——

JUDGE. Jeff—shut up. (*After pause.*) Mr. Sublette, this disclosure, to say the least, is deplorable. You'll have to show cause why you shouldn't be disbarred from further practice of law. I want to see you in my office in the morning. (*SUBLETTE rises and goes up. KATIE moves toward door.*) One moment, young lady. Miss O'Day, you are no kin of Peep O'Day.

KATIE. (*Tearfully*) No, I am all wrong.

JUDGE. Borrowing a phrase from your learned counsel—you are a weak victim of a stronger mind.

KATIE. I didn't know, Judge—I didn't know. (*Looking at PEEP.*)

SUBLETTE. Miss O'Day—I——

KATIE. Judge, when he came to me in Cincinnati and spoke about getting a bunch of money easy by coming to this rube town and playing the lady, it looked easy. I didn't understand. Why, that old man is no uncle of mine—I didn't know they made his kind these days. (*Crosses to PEEP.*) Gee, you're an ace. Well, I guess it's this way out for mine. (*She is about to go—JUDGE stops her.*)

JUDGE. I'm sorry, Miss O'Day, but you are the criminal here, and it is my painful duty.

PEEP. No, no, Judge.

JUDGE. But the law——

PEEP. (*Rises*) Jedge, they tried ter git my money, but they didn't git it. And, Jedge, when

you're alone, jest look at them papers. I heard Mr. Tom a-tellin' Miss Lucy oncet that if he had them papers Mr. Sublette had in his safe and a-belongin' to old Mrs. Glaser, he'd win his case. They was my puppose, and that's why I did what I done.

JUDGE. (*Glancing over papers*) Mr. Sublette—you goin' ter press this charge against Mr. O'Day?

SUBLETTE. I might—if I were going to stay in this town.

PEEP. Jedge—would yer mind tellin' me whether I'm crazy or not?

JUDGE. Why, Peep, you're the sanest man in this community.

PEEP. I know that, Jedge—c'u'd er told yer, but nobody asked me. Nobody understood but me and the kiddies. Now I'm goin' ter see that circus if I have ter buy it and keep it here, and I want all you folks ter cum again with me. You, Jedge, and everybody. (*Boys gather around him. Speaks to KATIE*) And you, too, honey—everybody. (*To audience*) An' that means you—— Will you cum to the circus with us fellers? Huh? Please!

CURTAIN

NOTES ON PRODUCTION

ACT I

While the original settings are included in this book, they are not arbitrary and any available characteristic scenery can be used and the entrances and exits can be adjusted to your settings. The buildings on the right of stage may be eliminated altogether and wood wings used instead. If you have no tree, a bench will do just as well. It is not necessary that the chipmunk be seen by the audience.

ACTS II AND III

It is not necessary to cut the stage for entrance to the cellar. Have cellar door backing absolutely black and have characters enter and exit from cellar door in such a manner than it is never wide open.

If caliope effect is not available, any brass instrument will do.

If red top boots with copper toes are not available, plain black boots will do, or even bright tan shoes. The text can be altered accordingly.

If desirable the lines for the boys may be distributed among all the boys in the cast.

PROPERTY PLOT

ACT I

Water tap and tub.
Circular bench.
Cushioned armchair.
Three soap-boxes.
Various pieces of harness.
Pocket knife.
Three sacks of grain.
Doctor's bag.
Sheriff's badge, belt, holster and revolver.
Water bucket.
Small stuffed chipmunk.
Lawyer's green bag containing legal papers.
Large cotton umbrella.
Fountain pen.
Silver dollar.
Peanuts.
Red and yellow bananas.
Ice cream cones.
Ginger-snaps.
Cookies.

ACT II

Platform.
High, old-fashioned teacher's desk.
Two benches without backs.
Blackboard on easel.
Small pail (in cellar).
Table.
Three Stools.
Chairs.
Boxes.

Sign over cellar door, "Peep's Fust Birthday."

Bunting and flags.

Badges.

Banner reading, "Peep's Pals Kermittee."

Hand bell (off stage).

Large school bell (off stage).

Tin pans.

Whistles and horns.

Large blue legal envelope tied with red ribbon.

Legal papers.

Two old yellow documents.

Old-fashioned wallet.

Cornet (off stage).

Legal paper.

Three watermelons.

Package of circus tickets.

Caliope effect (off stage).

ACT III

Old-fashioned musket.

Legal documents.

Letter.

Clarence

Comedy in 4 acts by Booth Tarkington. 5 males, 5 females. 2 interiors. Costumes, modern. Plays $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

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